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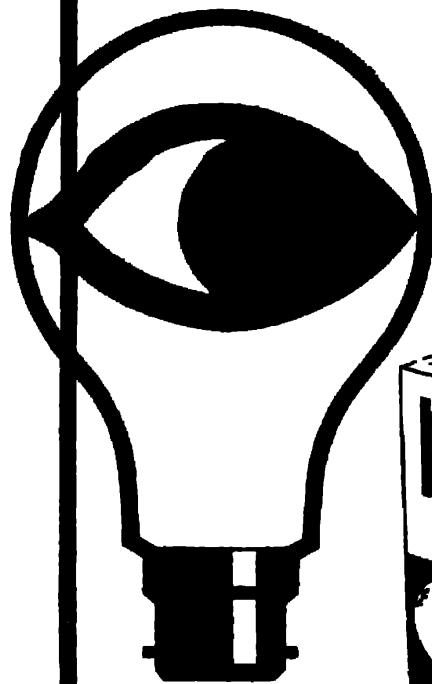
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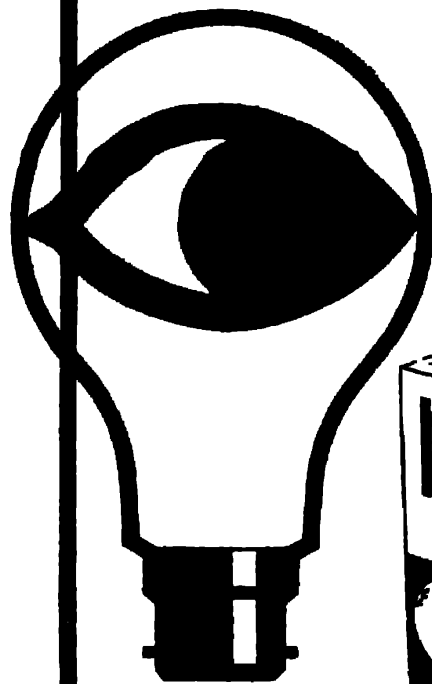


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CENTURY OLD BIRBHUM PAT

শ্রীশ্রীকৃষ্ণ

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Legle Litho

বসন্ত: প্রভাবমণ্ডল জনমানবল্লী স্রষ্টা হরষ বহি বসুধার্ত্ত বসন্ত ।
স্বা স্বস্তিচক্ষিতমণ্ডলসুদিসম্পন্নাব নাস্তাব শাস্ত্রমণবল্লী নদি করোতু ॥

GANDHI AND GANDHISM

SIBNARAYAN RAY

Head of Indian Studies, University of
Melbourne



I have recently edited an international symposium on *Gandhi, India and the world*, to be published early next year by the Melbourne University Press. It consists of twenty scholarly papers—seven from India, five from Australia, four from the U.S.A., two from the U.K. and one each from Norway and Israel. The papers were specifically commissioned for the volume, and among its distinguished contributors at least the following are certain to be known to Indian students of Gandhism—Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, Prof. Numai Kumar Bose and Amlan Datta, Mr. Philip Spratt, Professor Stephen Hay, Swami Aghananda Bharati, and Professors Hugh Tinker, Stanley Maron, Arne Naess, and Amiya Chakravarty.

Those who are familiar with my writings would know that I am not a Gandhian myself and I should state that my interest in the Mahatma is primarily that of a student of the history of ideas and social movements. While I do admire certain aspects of Gandhi and Gandhism, my philosophy of life is basically materialist, rationalist, cosmopolitan, eudaemonic and libertarian. I am not certain how many genuine Gandhians there are in India today, but the two I do know personally, Shri Jayaprakash (who is visiting Australia shortly) and Prof. Bose, command my highest regard, even though I do not share many of their beliefs and commitments.

In spite of the claims of the Congress Government and some of the opposition parties and groups to the heritage of Gandhi, the evidence of their policies and conduct shows that the claims are altogether unfounded. For a while Gandhi's ideas and techniques appeared to have made a powerful impact on the Negro struggle for racial equality in the United States, but the tragic fate of Martin Luther King and subsequent developments raise serious doubts about the practical worth of Gandhism in solving the problems of our times. In planning the symposium my aim was to get a number of competent people to re-examine the record from various points of view and to offer their appraisals. In the rest of this essay I shall try to indicate what I consider to be some of the major issues that require careful analysis.

II

The inquiry has necessarily to begin with the fact that for two decades Mahatma Gandhi led a national movement involving millions that has hardly any parallel in history. The extraordinary nature of Gandhi's leadership with its consistent emphasis on non-violence in thought and action is clearly seen when contrasted with the major political upheavals of the inter-war years with their equally consistent record of violence, brutality and terror, to wit, Bolshevism in the Soviet Union, Fascism in

GANDHI AND GANDHISM

Italy, Nazism in Germany and developments in China and Japan, Portugal and Spain and the countries of Eastern Europe.

In retrospect Gandhi's role in the decolonisation process which brought about India's independence may prove to be less decisive than is commonly assumed—(this point has been argued by Professor R. C. Majumdar in his *History of the Freedom Movement Vol. 3*)—but no one is likely to dispute that for an understanding of the history of the twentieth century a careful scrutiny of Gandhi's personality and career and of the complex of ideas and methods known as Gandhism is of major importance. Such examination is all the more necessary since much of the proliferating literature on Gandhi so far has been unfortunately biographic in approach written for the converted by the converted.

There is general agreement that in the development of Gandhi's personality and his theory and practice of *satyagraha* the years in South Africa were most crucial. It is evident even from the most biographical sketch of Gandhi (by the Rev. Joseph J. Doke) that not only did the evolution of *satyagraha* go hand in hand with Gandhi's personal development but his charisma had a vital bearing on the effectiveness of his technique of group action. This would suggest several lines of inquiry. To what extent was the basic structure of his personality already shaped and moulded by the experiences of his childhood and early youth in particular by his upbringing in a Gujarati middle class *vaishya* family? How much did he owe to the influence of Jainism and the bhakti tradition? Was his study of the *Bhagavadgita* as important as he subsequently claimed it to have been? How far was his personality altered by his experience of humiliation *apartheid* and baseless crossroads in the Godforsaken continent where I found my God?

Gandhi later on claimed that the most creative experience of his life was the bitter and lonely night at the Pretoria Pines station in 1893. This may well be so in that during that night he pronounced not the momentous decision not to run away from ugly reality but to face it and try to change it by identifying himself with the suffering of its victims. But external evidence indicates that striking developments in his life style and ideas began about ten years later after he had read Ruskin's *Unto This Last* which inspired him to organize the Phoenix Farm in 1904. Could it also be that apart from the problems raised by the first *satyagraha* campaign of 1906 the very

strain of his prolonged voluntary exile made him particularly receptive to the ideas of Tolstoy who was himself spiritually alienated from his society and civilization?

Doke spoke of Gandhi's saintliness although this aspect would appear to have become particularly pronounced after he took to the loin cloth during the *satyagraha* movement of 1920-22. However in Gandhi's saintliness it is difficult to find anything in the nature of miracles or mystical experience, a feature which distinguishes him not only from traditional saints like Kabir or Chaitanya but also from modern saints like Ramkrishna Paramahansa or Sri Anandabindu. In fact Gandhi's religion would seem to be more occupied with personal and group ethics than with the intuition of transcendence. It is reasonable to guess that there was some intimate connection between Gandhi's dharma and the vow of *brahmacharya* which he took in 1906. But how much did this vow owe to the traditional ideal of *moksha* or the decision to dedicate himself completely to active social service or an unconquerable will to power? His isetic ethic of voluntary suffering and self-sacrigation was to him an indicator source of inner strength and equipoise but it did not always appear to preclude a fully planned advertisement of himself along with his cause. He took for example an energetic interest in the preparation, publication, and even the sales and distribution of his first biography by Doke (for evidence see *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Vol. 9*). In the circumstances it is not surprising that some of his critics and opponents especially in India insisted that the Mahatma was really not all that simply.

At last part of his success as a political leader Gandhi owed to qualities which are rarely associated with *mahatmas*—shrewdness, punctuality and organizational competence, scrupulous calculation of resources and their most profitable utilization, a flair for negotiation and drafting of documents, skill in subtly outmanoeuvring his rivals in public life, pragmatic flexibility which allowed him to retract his steps when an enterprise proved to be overtly hazardous, etc. It is hard not to suspect that elements of the *bharya* and lawyer survived in the man of truthfulness and love. In India his close friends and associates included some of the most wealthy and powerful business magnates like G. D. Birla, Ambalal Sarabhai and Jamnalal Bajaj. However, it would be a gross oversimplification to conclude that he was at best a saint manque. The record of his life bears ample witness to the genuineness of his faith and devotion, his profound and active

GANDHI AND GANDHISM

compassion for the lowly and oppressed his phenomenal gift for moving and inspiring them to great acts of courage nobility and heroic sacrifice, his constant concern with the rightness of means and methods, and his untiring readiness to take suffering on himself before calling upon others to do so in any effort. The complex nature and source of his charisma demand much more careful investigation than they appear to have received so far from his biographers.

The relation between the personality of the leader and the movements organized by him raises another set of issues. The historic import of *satyagraha* derives from its combination of non-violence with group participation. But how vitally does this rare combination depend on the presence of the charismatic leader? With Gandhi's departure from South Africa the movement there faded out into pathetic inconsequence. Gandhi himself of course put great stress on the training of *satyagrahis* but even with him is rather very few of his disciples developed the inner resources to initiate, sustain and guide non-violent group action. Genuine charisma as Max Weber has pointed out can only be awakened or tested; it cannot be learned or taught. Routinization of charisma which is essential if it is not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon radically changes the character of charismatic authority. How fatally would this affect the dynamism of *satyagraha*?

There is also the question of the size and character of the group which may be expected to act non-violently in a situation of crisis even when led by the most authentically charismatic personality. In South Africa the group which participated in *satyagraha* was relatively small (according to Gandhi's report to Tolstoy about 2,000) it was also not very heterogeneous. The early experiences in *Satyagraha* in India were also deliberately restricted to small homogeneous groups, but the non-cooperation campaigns which established Gandhi as a world figure involved vast masses of people. Although Gandhi strenuously worked at and to an astonishing extent succeeded in keeping these movements non-violent for a stretch of time he was constantly confronted with problems which he found exceedingly hard if not altogether impossible, to solve. The use of symbols legends and rituals which had strong appeal to certain classes and communities did not evoke equal response in others. What was much more serious, to sustain the enthusiasm of the masses promises of quick and spectacular results had to be held out (like '*swaraj*' in one

year) which of course, did not materialize. The danger was always there that the participating masses who were mostly not trained *satyagrahis* would resort to violence or after a while relapse into sullen passivity when tangible gains were discovered to be disproportionately small in comparison with their needs and stoked up expectations and the price in suffering and loss. It was this danger against which Rabindranath Tagore repeatedly warned in the course of his public controversies with the Mahatma. Gandhi's constructive programme which apart from its intrinsic importance he expected would provide an answer to this problem attracted few even among his close disciples. The movement of 1942 which explored his authority without his being able to guide it showed hardly any signs of the influence of his non-violent principles or techniques.

Can then a non-violent struggle maintain its unique character when undertaken on a mass scale or does it by its nature require to be limited to small highly disciplined and trained and relatively homogeneous groups? Besides how far did Gandhi's success qualify as it was depend on (a) the moral political vulnerability of the British and (b) the distinctive traditions of the Hindus? Would his methods have worked against a totalitarian tyranny of the Nazi type in Germany or the Stalinist type in Europe? Do they have a chance in Czechoslovakia today? Would they evoke large scale response in people with very different religious-cultural moorings like the Muslims or the Jews or the Negroes in America?

Doke also rightly indicated how Gandhi was at once a traditionalist and a revolutionary, how he imbued old beliefs and practices with new meanings and objectives how in particular he adopted and transformed the well-known Hindu method of *dharma* into the philosophy of *satyagraha*. However Gandhi's remarkable success in the political use of tradition has generally tended to obscure the problems involved in his endeavour. Although his religious and social beliefs were in certain respects startlingly unorthodox and ecumenical, the traditions from which he drew primarily were those of the Hindu *bhakti* movements, especially of North and West India. A dispassionate inquiry has yet to be undertaken into the effect of his politicization of some of these traditions upon the alienation of the Muslims from the Congress, or of Bengal and parts of the South from the nationalist movement in the North.

In a country historically as multi-cultural

as India revival of traditions, especially by linking them with political mass movements, would appear to be fraught with the hazards of centrifugality. It may secure emotional rapprochement between a particular community or the people of a particular region and its leadership but will it not also tend to activate dormant conflicts and rivalries between different communities and/or regional cultures? On the other hand, an unambiguous commitment on the part of the leaders to a rational and secular approach to the problems of the country would almost certainly take a much longer time to influence the tradition-oriented masses. But is it not also more likely to produce a more genuine sense of unity and common purpose and in the long run a more stable basis of national reconstruction?

Gandhi's use of tradition reinforced the appeal of his charisma, but did it not also seriously weaken the rationalist movement that had been promoted in India during the 19th century by liberal reformers like Lokहितwadi, Vidyasagar, Akshay Datta, Ranade, Agarkar, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Behnani, Malabari or Viresalingam Pantulu? Again, while his concern for the untouchables and his efforts to remove the prejudice of the caste Hindus were undoubtedly genuine the criticism called for his approach by such leaders of the untouchables as Dr. B. R. Ambedkar demands careful consideration. It may also be necessary to examine if his very personal almost arbitrary interpretation and utilization of the Bhagavadgita did not help to strengthen the obscurantist style of thinking of the nationalist intelligentsia.

However, for an understanding and evaluation of Gandhism what appears to be particularly crucial is the issue between non-violence and the social utopia which he described as *Raj Raj*. Many followers of Gandhi while claiming to accept his ideal of *ahimsa* have been sceptical about his anarchist vision. It is of course possible to separate the two but in Gandhi's thinking they were integral elements of a unified philosophy of life. The relation was explained fully for the first time in *Hisd Swaraj* and he never withdrew from that position. In fact *Hisd Swaraj* occupies in Gandhism a place possibly even more important than does the Communist Manifesto in Marxism or the Discourse on Inequality in Rousseau's political philosophy. To minimize its importance for the sake of making Gandhism

respectable to non-Gandhians, maybe, in tune with the contemporary spirit of revisionism, but it would certainly not be fair to Gandhi.

The total rejection of modern civilization which is at the heart of the Gandhian utopia is the most obstinate element in his philosophy. It may have some appeal to those young men and women in the West who from various motivations appear to have elected to 'drop out', but in the context of our times when every economically underdeveloped country is seeking to industrialize itself as quickly as possible, it is unlikely to make much of an impact. Nevertheless on this issue as on so many others, it would be, I believe very much worth while to re-examine carefully the Gandhian position. Is it not at least possible that some of Gandhi's criticisms of modern civilization may on analysis prove to be as pertinent and fruitful as Marx's critique of 19th century capitalism? May not his stress on decentralization provide a valuable starting point for a reappraisal of some of the widely held views on economic and political reconstruction which in application appear to have created more problems than they have been able to solve?

Finally, there is the claim that Gandhism provides an answer to aggression and war. On the face of it the claim would seem to be rather tall and in view of all the accumulating evidence of collective aggressiveness, it is hard to see what chance non-violent methods would have in dealing with the problem on a global scale. Gandhi however did try to formulate the primary elements of his methodology of non-violently resisting military aggression and of reducing armed conflict between nations although he had no occasion to experiment with these methods in the context of a war. Several thinkers in recent years (eg. Niles Sharp, Hunsbrough etc.) have given their attention to the far-reaching implications of his methodology and the pressure of our critical situation makes it virtually certain that at least in the West the examination will continue.

I have in this brief essay confined myself deliberately to raising critical issues. Some of them have been discussed extensively in the symposium. But this is patently a vast and complex undertaking. I can only hope that other serious students of our times will join in so that what is truly valuable in Gandhi and Gandhism may not get buried under the accumulating weight of platitudinous verbiage or rhetorical panegyrics.

Our Modern Period

ANNADA SUBHAKAR RAY

IF Indian history is divided into Ancient, Medieval and Modern Periods and not into Hindu Muslim and British, it will immediately become clear that the end of British rule was not the end of a Period of our history but only of an Era. It did not last more than a couple of centuries in Bengal. In the Punjab it was barely a century old.

Our Modern Period commenced about the same time as British rule but it was independent of the British presence. Modern does not necessarily mean British. It is common to all modern countries such as Britain, France, Germany, Russia, America, Japan, China.

Even if India had remained independent of the British thanks to Sirajud-doula's possible victory at Plassey, she would have entered the Modern Period all the same of her own motion like Japan or Turkey sooner or later. A late-comer in the field of modernity India would have made more energetic efforts to catch up with the rest of the modern world.

These energetic efforts would have required a modern view of life and reality, not the old traditional view. A break with tradition was inevitable. Modern India would have been nearer to the other modern nations therefore further away from her own traditional spirit and form. Clash of cultures would have been in that case between tradition and modernity and not between East

and West, as it happened during British rule. The clash between tradition and modernity continues still.

All that anger against Britain for introducing railways and steamships and destroying handicrafts and rural self-sufficiency would have been shifted to the Indian rulers or political leaders. All that hatred for conquering or annexing one Indian state after another would have been directed towards our own imperialists or nationalists. Much of what the British did was in the interests of modernisation and unification of India. To that extent British instrumentality was the same as Indian instrumentality except for the difference between a British decision and an Indian decision. The British did what Indian history demanded of Indians.

They also filled up certain gaps in our public life which we ourselves would have filled up sooner or later. A modern State run by permanent officials according to law not arbitrarily by a royal fiat. An independent judiciary based on a system of law and justice common to the whole of India. A Legislature which became increasingly representative of the people and to which the Executive became increasingly responsible. An organised public opinion expressing itself in speech and writing, making use of the printing press, a novelty. A modern system of communications which favoured political consciousness and unfettered internal trade. A new sys-

tem of education which embraced schools, colleges and universities imparting New Learning.

There is no doubt in my mind that our own people would have introduced these changes in due course but it is difficult to believe that they would have met with no opposition from the traditionalists. I do not think a democratic system would have been granted by our own rulers without a struggle. There was nothing in our old traditions which favoured government of the people and by the people though there was considerable emphasis on government for the people. Our age-old precepts had been concerned with a benevolent autocracy, not liberty or equality of everyman. These ideas evolved in the West and cost revolutions and upheavals.

All these came to us either as gifts from our British rulers or as reforms wrested from them as a result of struggle. They on their part had wrested the same things from their own ruling classes in course of centuries of fighting. Thus Indian history in its modern phase is derived from British or European history to a very large extent. Makers of modern India were all English-educated men and women, many of them trained in England. If they looked back to the Medieval Period it was for other important things of life such as religion and morality and a craft and agriculture-based economy. But there were many who

were completely modernised even in these things

Now that the British era is over there is an apprehension that we may lose the baby with the bath water. Down with British rule may mean Down with Modernity. Unless we take care we may be victims of a new authoritarianism. In India the old is just beneath the surface. It may revive itself and we may find ourselves back in the Medieval Period. Some of the prevalent ideologies have a backward pull for the masses. Neither Liberty nor Equality is firmly fixed in our hearts and minds though they are on our lips.

Anarchy set in towards the end of the British era. It has now grown in size and violence. We do not know how to keep

under control. It may sweep everything before it. At last the armed forces may have to step in and re-establish control. Once they enter the political arena out goes the civil power along with its party system. Voluntary abdication of power is something upon which human experience cannot rely. A struggle will have to be waged again to put the armed forces back in their place. But why not prevent it by taking time by the forelock? The key lies in taming the anarchic elements before they become untameable. We know all about these elements. They are not yet beyond redemption. They will certainly respond if they feel that there is justice and fairness in this world. Not lawlessness, bribery and pressure. What

is lacking today is a concern for ethical values. We miss Mahatma Gandhi as a force for righteousness. This is not to say that there are no other men who matter.

In the measure that we hold fast to Gandhian standards of ethical dealing in the offices, institutions, shops and factories, we assert our superiority over the elements of anarchy. Turning to the police will do little good. The police is torn by anarchy. It is a pity that the public does not know which authority is not torn by internal wrangles. But the public should learn how to save itself. In anarchy is the lamp that burns but is a guide that does not lead. No one can protect us from being frightened ourselves.

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HARAPPA

Harappa archaeological site was paid by Masson in 1826 and Burnes reiterated the possibility of important archaeological finds in the vicinity in 1831 but the credit for the preliminary excavations goes to General Cunningham who visited Harappa in 1853, 1856 and 1872-73 and published a report as early as 1875 in the Archaeological Survey of India in which he made a reference to the famous find of a pictographic seal of the 'Unicorn'.

General Cunningham says: "The ruins of Harappa are the most extensive of all the old sites along the banks of the Ravi. On the north-west and the south there is a continuous line of mounds, about 3500 feet in length, but on the east side which is only 2000 feet in length there is a strip of 800 feet for which I am unable to account. The whole circuit of the ruins is therefore 12,500 feet or nearly 2-1/2 miles. The highest mound to the north-west is 60 feet above the fields. On the south-west and the south the mounds range from 40 to 50 feet in height and on the north side towards the old bed of the Ravi 25 to 30 feet." This is the oldest description of the mounds of Harappa before the laying of the railway line.

Before the archaeologist made his appearance on the scene, the railway gang-engaged in the construction of the lines had mutilated the top layers of the historic site. Sir John Marshall, Director-General of Archaeology in India, visited Harappa and in his report to the Government (1920-21) mentioned that the field of discovery was so vast that to locate points of

real value was beset with great difficulties. Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, Superintendent of Archaeology Northern Circle, made a start on the excavations and the results were quite encouraging in spite of the fact that most of the mounds were dug up by the brick-hunters.



Beautiful carved sandstone torso of a dancing girl with lots of long movable head bands etc.

who were oblivious of the fact that they were actually digging at a glorious past civilization.

Excavations were made under the able guidance of Sahni at the site of the mounds which had suffered least from the brick-hunters and seals were found, one of them exhibiting the device of the famous humpless bull (zebu) with the Indus

Valley script, which had defied all attempts of interpretation until last year.

Although much had been lost due to the "operation brick" during the construction of the railway, yet a sufficient number of ancient relics were found to establish that the ancient civilization of Harappa was exactly similar to that of Mohenjo-Daro, on the right bank of the river Indus, about 400 miles from Harappa. In fact, it has been guessed, perhaps rightly that both Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro were the twin capitals of an ancient kingdom, which suffered a very cruel fate at the hands of unknown invaders who massacred not only the inhabitants one and all but set fire to the cities before leaving.

Sir John Marshall says in his report to the Government in 1923-24, "In the field of exploration it is natural this year to give the premier place to the remarkable discoveries made by the Department in Sind and the south-west Punjab for it is safe to say that no such epoch-making discoveries have fallen to the lot of an archaeologist in this country. Now at a single bound we have taken back our knowledge of Indian civilization some 3,000 years earlier and have established the fact that in the 3rd millennium before Christ and even before that people in the Punjab and Sind were living in well-built cities and were in possession of a relatively mature culture with a high standard of art and craftsmanship and a developed system of pictographic writing."

The pictographic writing which had remained one of the greatest archaeological

mysteries has at last been deciphered, Indian archaeologists having found a key to the script not to speak of the great painstaking study made by the Russians and the Finns, who have used the Computer in analysing the various symbols and found their interpretation last year.

The Harappa civilization, like that of Mohenjo-Daro, came to an abrupt end. Lord-swinging invaders from the west suddenly fell upon the essentially agricultural population of Harappa, who were apparently a peace-loving group. The sword injuries on the skulls and the decapitated skulls excavated show and confirm the fact. Other groups of several skeletons in various postures suggest simultaneous death. A complete layer of ash also gives a clue that the invaders not only mercilessly slaughtered the entire population including women and children but to make the destruction complete set fire to the city before leaving.

It is known that the Harappans did not have any weapons of offense or defence and the only instruments they had were the hunting implements like the bow and arrow, the spear, the axe, the dagger and the mace, remnants of which have been discovered under the mounds.

After destroying Harappa, the invaders proceeded to other seats of civilization of a similar type including Mohenjo-Daro. The identity of the invaders has not been established with any degree of certainty. Many historians are of the opinion that the invaders were Aryans but others argue that the destruction of Harappa and Mohenjo-



Terra-cotta figurines

Daro took place about a thousand years earlier than the Aryan invasion into India. Very strong as the evidence as the destruction by sword and fire is, yet, destruction by other causes such as an earthquake or due to flooding of rivers cannot be ruled out.

Among the archaeological discoveries at Harappa is a building which measures 155 feet by 135 feet consisting of two series of parallel walls opposite each other opening to a central corridor 24 feet wide. Archaeologists have called this hall "The Corridor Hall" and this is similar to the famous 'Assembly Hall' at Mohenjo-Daro. The Corridor Hall was presumably used for gatherings religious or otherwise.

Houses in Harappa were many storied and spacious. Well-baked bricks went into their construction. Amenities like bathrooms and lavatories not available even nowadays to many households of our contemporary age, were then available to every house. The civic organisation was so complex and excellent that in some respects it provided better amenities to the residents

than those available in many parts of our country even today. The drainage system, especially, was superb, disposing off rain water and sewage in a quick and efficient manner. An archaeological expert says, "The city is no chance growth. It is planned and regimented by a civic authority whose will was law."

The important find of pictographic seals, made of stone, paste and ivory, depicting elaborately carved animals, such as the bull, the rhinoceros, the buffalo, the crocodile, the elephant, the antelope, the lion, the bear, the hare, the squirrel, the monkey etc. with inscriptions in pictographic script, point to the fact that the Harappans were animal lovers or for that matter, even animal worshippers. One pictographic seal that often appears during the excavation was that of the 'Horned God'—a figure with two large curved horns with bracelets on the arms sitting on a low throne surrounded by animals like the elephant, the tiger, the buffalo and the rhinoceros.

Sir John Marshall remarks: "There is more or

less clear evidence that the rainfall in the fourth millennium and third must have been larger though far from being abundant than it happens at present. The very animals which come before us on the coins and the seals excavated seem to be animals that flourish in the jungle country."

Dr C Ramaswami, who retired as the Director General of Observatories recently has reconstructed the weather of the Indus Valley during the Harappan-Mohenjo-Darian times and has come to the conclusion that the Indus Valley had abundant rainfall in those bygone days and that the weather has changed slowly during the past several centuries.

The discovery in 1921 at Harappa of a pictographic seal made of soapstone depicting the one-horned horse (the mythical Unicorn) with pictographic script by Rai Bahadur Davaram Sahni, Superintendent of Archaeology Northern Circle and an exactly similar find by Rakhai Das Banerji, his counterpart of the Western Circle a year later at Mohenjo-Daro 400 miles to the south was indeed a significant pointer that the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro cities belonged to the same ancient kingdom. Later of course other similarities from more archaeological finds were established.

Both Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro have been well known for their painted pottery, ranging in size from tiny clay pots for children's play to huge earthen jars for depositing the bones of the dead. The pottery is of red clay embellished by black motifs of the peacock and a

variety of other themes including floral designs. In one piece of painted pottery, a fisherman is shown, as carrying two fishing nets suspended from a pole placed on his shoulders with a fish and a turtle near his feet. Another piece of pottery shows the branches of a tree with a dog suckling its young ones below it, with motifs of two birds and a star in the top of the fragment.

Although the colour used for the motifs is generally black, occasionally red, green and yellow colours have also been recognised. The material used for the finer pottery is faience which is a substance manufactured by a difficult process and consisted of some base mixed with powdered glaze. This mixture was fired in an oven to form a vitreous substance with a glazed surface which was coloured by mixing mineral substances.

The discovery of a sculptured figure of a sandstone torso of a dancing girl in which the head, arms and legs seem to have been fitted separately with metal pegs is an interesting item at Harappa. The nipples of the torso seem to have been placed in some plastic material.

Other finds include a graded system of weights and volumetric measures, copper and polished mirrors with handles. Toys in abundance have been found including the famous 'clay cart' with wheels and hulls of terra cotta. These wheeled contraptions, miniatures of actual bullock carts in use at that time were unknown during the Pharaoh's regime in Egypt, even centuries later. Other toys of animals have detachable heads which

could be moved by operating a string. Pottery whistles shaped like birds and other figurines, both of clay and terra cotta have been discovered in large numbers at Harappa.

There is no doubt that the Harappan men and women were fond of jewellery. Necklaces, fillets, armlets and finger rings were worn by both men and women. Gold and silver ornaments were known at that time and Sir John describes them thus: "The gold ornaments were so well-finished and so highly polished that they might come out of a Bond Street jeweller rather than from a historic house 5000 years ago." He continues, "A singularly beautiful necklace is made of soft-green jadeite beads with discs of gold in between, producing the effect of a bead and real moulding with pendant drops in front of the agate-jasper."

Outside the citadel at Harappa are a group of a double row of cottages, each with two rooms one room larger than the other. At least 14 such cottages have been excavated and probably there were many more. These have been identified as the workmen's quarters who were employed for pounding corn. A little further away are rows of circular working floors about 10 to 12 feet in diameter built of baked bricks with wooden mortars sunk in the centre for pounding wheat and barley into flour with long heavy pestles. This practice is prevalent even nowadays in the villages of the south and in Bengal. Strange as it may seem, the remnants of the wooden mortar and the grain chaff have been discovered in the hollows



These circular brick platforms (reconstructed) with counters of wooden mortar in the centre were used for pounding wheat and barley with long wooden pestles.

at the centre. Other grains known at the time included sesame and rice. Cotton was also grown and cloth woven out of it.

A little separated from the workmen's platforms was the granary, 150 feet by 200 feet with buttressed walls and storage blocks built on raised brick structures about 20 feet by 40 feet. Ruins of enclosures of metal furnaces were located a few yards from the granary.

'The concentration of various trades and industries into specific quarters or streets, of course common in oriental towns up to the present day. But this relegation of a particular group of occupations to a restricted area of the city with the provision of a housing scheme evidently drawn out in the city architect's office represents something consciously organised. To the Harappa

civilization we must attribute the first really organised industries in Western India, as distinct from that of a craftsmen's guild,' says Stuart Piggot, Professor of pre-historic archaeology at Edinburgh University.

The cemetery at Harappa was situated outside the walls of the town. The same site seems to have been used over and over again for cremations, as evidenced by later graves. But these separate graves contain the urns and goods deposited along with the dead which are all similar in character. The dead body head was usually placed towards the north with similar pottery vessels usually numbering 15 to 20 together with the personal ornaments or toilet requisites. An important discovery made by Sir Mortimer Wheeler who retired

as the Director General of Archaeology of undivided India relates to the body of a girl buried in a wooden coffin and wrapped in a shroud of reeds. This type of reed shroud was known in Sumer and Akkad in 2500 B.C. and the find is believed to be a connecting link between the Sumer and Indus Valley Civilizations and their mutual trade connections.

One of the earliest forms of burial at Harappa was by placing the dead body in a brick chamber in a crouching position. By far, the most common burial practice was what was known as 'Pot Burial'—a large round earthen jar was used as a receptacle for holding small jars each containing an unburnt bone of each dead member of the family—in fact, a family vault. In another form the ashes of the



The skeleton of a man, quite intact in his grave, with pottery near him. The dead at Harappa were buried along with their personal belongings.

burnt body were preserved in clay urns.

During excavations a citadel roughly of dimension 1200 feet X 600 feet shaped like a parallelogram has been discovered at Harappa. This defensive wall of mud-brick lined with burnt-brick on the outside rises to a height of 35 feet and has a base of 40 feet in width. The main entrance to the citadel was from the north with an additional western gateway with some terraces used for some sort of religious or secular ceremonies. This defensive wall was strengthened by rectangular blocks some of which protruded over the wall itself.

Very little is known almost nothing in fact of the rulers of the mighty Indus Valley Kingdom of the third millennium B.C., but it has been guessed that this country was ruled by a priestly class whose word was law. No temples or idols have been discovered so far and all indications are that the ancient Harappans were worship-

pers of the God Siva or Pasupati the God of the Animals. The two-horned God found on pictographic seals surrounded by animals is believed to be the God of the Harappan people.

No account of Harappa can be complete without reference to the attempt made by several scholars to decipher the pictographic script of the Harappan people. One of the more recent attempts (1930-40) to decipher the Indus Valley Script was that of the late Rev. H. H. Heras S.J. Director of the Indian Historical Research Institute of the St. Xavier's College, Bombay, who maintained that the language of the Harappans was proto-Dravidian i.e. a language from which the Dravidian languages were evolved. Heras claimed to have read names and even pieces of poetry from the pictographic writings.

Other scholars are firmly of the view that the Harappan language was Aryan in origin and Fateh

Singh of the Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute and Krishna Rao of the Archaeological Survey have come forward very recently with their interpretations of the pictographic script of Harappa.

Among the foreign teams who have given great thought to the problem are a team of Russian scholars, Khorozov, Volcok, Gurov and Alekseyev who analysed the grammar and linguistic structure of the Indus Valley Script by using a Computer. They were able to separate out with almost certain exactitude the signs which appear to have had some grammatical or linguistic functions. After a deep study, they have come to the conclusion that the Indus Valley script is nearest to the Dravidian in grammatical structure. The script however, is to be read from the right to the left.

The other foreigners who made serious attempts to decipher the script were the Finns Asko Parpola, P. Aalto Simo Parpola and S. Koskeniemi who started on the assumption that the Indus Valley language was essentially Dravidian. They also used the Computer independently and came to the conclusion that each sign represents a complete word. The Finns separated some 300 basic signs. With very few exceptions the script is to be read from the right to the left. Archaeologists believe that the Finns have succeeded in deciphering the script or at least believe that the line of their approach is correct. The computer is a marvellous invention, indeed.

Some reflections on what India reads

KA NAA SUBRAMANYAM

WHEN some more or less popular writer who considers himself a success, tells me that he invariably writes what his readers want to read I congratulate him on knowing what his readers want and supplying the demand so ably. In a commercial age like ours when economic values tend to override other values in human consideration there does not seem to be anything wrong in there being a law of demand and supply in letters as well.

During a famous controversy of those days it was Henry James who made the observation that while he had no objection to being as widely read as the successful H. G. Wells, he forgot his readers when he wrote, he simply wrote what was in him. This might save his integrity as a writer but did not serve his popularity as he himself was aware only too well.

We still cling to the conception that the practice of letters is a personal art, a private art. But this position is hardly tenable in days of developing mass-communication media—though such development is in a very elementary stage in backward India. Since Independence, we seem to be in the worst of both worlds—the world of the art of

personal letters and the world of the art of public letters as allowed by mass-media like newspapers, the radio and the like.

In the so-called golden age the age of simplicity as it were, the Adi-Kavi could consider himself wholly superior to the others, the others would not think of questioning such an assumption. If the poet was worth while or was thought worth while the readers would seek him out, instead of as in modern times the poet seeking his readers or trying to supply their wants. The poets and writers of an earlier day were not concerned with problems of communication milieu, class and the like, they simply could give what was in them, this integrity and sincerity was accepted and thanked for. But today integrity and sincerity themselves are suspect, we tend to be more cynical, we believe that every man including a writer has a price. The readers demand what they want and they see to it that they get what they want.

Some four or five years ago, I tried to analyse from the contents of a few books and magazines the fare that was being fed to the Indian reader in general and what he expected to find in his favourite writers. In this

essay I shall attempt to try to understand and to state as far as I understand the general qualities of the bulk of the reading done by the average Indian and the material which they want and seem to be getting more and more.

First it has to be confessed that in countries where there are developed mass-communication methods they try to survey periodically the quality of the audience and then I Q. Our mass-media are not very well developed let us however, not go into the reasons for it as, for instance, our surrender of literature to the periodical press or to various bureaucracies, our radio being a Government monopoly and the like. But it is interesting to note that there has never been in these twenty years any attempt at an analysis of readers, the audience at whom the vast amount of writing done in India is directed. There has never been any attempt at estimating the I Q of the average general reader. Why? Is one afraid of the process of analysis itself or is it that we might be constrained to find that the general reader has no I Q, no even the I—standing both for intelligence and individuality? This is an interesting speculation but strictly by the way.

In all the Indian languages—including Eng-

SOME REFLECTIONS ON WHAT INDIA READS

lish—we are treated to material which consumes a lot of space and reading time. As most representative of this type of reading that almost every one does whether one wants to or not we can instance the daily papers—some of them national some regional a few not so national. We can include in this section the popular weeklies also—the most popular of which are really popular in languages like Tamil Bengali Hindi Malayalam etc.

As fare offered to a developed human intelligence what strikes any unprejudiced observer is that the quality of most of this material is substandard in more senses than one. Much of it is escapist—whether the writing deals with politics or culture or wholly unsentimental science—it is geared to take the reader out of the world in which he has to struggle for his living. All of this material even the most factual seems to be served up in a wholly sentimental fashion: there is no objectivity even about the news we read in our daily papers: it is doctored more or less by a free press to suit—to quote an authority like our Prime Minister—“those over the Editors.” (Even the idea that there are those over the Editors in journals is unseemly but we take it in our stride). The subjectivity of the daily and weekly fare we read is a wholly sickly subjectivity aimed at producing a numbness not a humbleness of mind.

The general Indian reader if it is submitted to him that his reading is wholly substandard intellectually piffing does not react. He does not seem

to mind it being so. It would seem that he is honestly afraid of being lowbrow—for even that averageness seems to indicate a mind which he would prefer to be without. Any other set of readers in any other milieu than the Indian would react somehow—one might argue that being lowbrow is good that highbrows are hopelessly incompetent to run a socialistic world that being intellectual does not butter your bread etc. All these are perfectly valid arguments but the Indian reader does not advance them: he is wholly apathetic, uninterested in the quantity of the material supplied to him. It is served and he laps it up.

The recent controversy about the Congress—the struggle between Indira Gandhi and the Syndicate—produced a great deal of writing and comment to which the general reader was generously treated. I read about seven dailies in the day including two Tamil ones and I can say with certainty that in all the thousands of words I read not even a hundred appealed to me as addressed to a minimum of intelligence or integrity. This might seem on the face of it a sweeping statement as, for instance, all our publicists, writers, politicians, top-notch journalists, commentators were engaged in writing on this problem, not to mention the pitiful efforts of the Dear Sir variety of letter-writers. But honestly asked any person endowed with the least quantum of an analytical mind would have to confess that the spate of words was unintelligent, inconclusive, wholly unbright.

One might excuse it saying that it was only politics. But politics is as much a part of our life today as philosophy or culture, if we can distinguish them like that; it might even be argued that our politics is both our culture and philosophy. Without labouring this point too much let me go on to talk of a group discussion we had in Delhi on a recent Tamil novel by a fairly successful novelist. It was a group of people—all highly efficient in holding their jobs, well-informed, intelligent—as the phrases go. A few of them had even the temerity to call themselves intellectual and highbrow. The person who thinks he is the most intellectual of the group because he is semantically qualified to use the greatest number of intellectual words in English claimed that the novel was written with an adolescent reader in view—vaguely idealistic, sentimental, exaggerating an unrecognisable form of love and the like. There is nothing preventing a novelist from projecting a novel towards his ideal readers. If they are the larger class of adolescent readers probably his novel will sell the better. Granting that one asks the question whether the particular novelist who has produced a score of novels has produced yet an adult novel? He had not to presume that this effort of his aimed at the adolescent readership is wrong then. There was no reply. One could have gone further on and established that a children's book could be as great as Alice but most are not.

One feels that most of the writing done today in India whether in English or in

other languages is geared to the needs of an exploding neo-literate class. The neo-literate class in India is wholly given over to sentimentality, to escapism, to formulae and slogans and to a conception of religion that is secular and a morality that is amoral. To contrast the amorality of the European and the Indian will be to learn large lessons in attitudes. The amorality of Europe was dynamic; the current amorality of the Indian is passive, cynical and wholly given over to being sometimes moral and sometimes immoral—in short, an idea of having the best of both the worlds. Our secularism is again like that—it is not a reconciliation of material and spiritual but a compromise between God and Mammon so that there might be the dominance of self-interest. In politics too we believe in non-alignment in the hope of having the best of both the worlds. Indian life today is non-aligned in more senses than one—even alive we are dead and do not mind it, we can both be alive and dead; it is the Indian synthesis par excellence.

Even in so-called advanced societies too the greater part of writing which is read by the largest number is escapist, as the interest in Vedanta evinced by Americans would testify; as the popular success of Erle Stanley Gardner and Georges Simenon would amply testify. But the majority that prefers escape reading in France is perhaps a 60% majority, in the United States the majority is perhaps a 70% majority—the figures are arbitrary. I have no sources of information except by the number

of books each kind they produce, in India the escapist majority is 95% and growing larger, instead of smaller. This increase in the majority culture if we can use the term in this context has been abetted by the so-called literary activities of the Establishment—the All-India Radio, the Sahitya Akademi, the Universities and others.

It is understandable that the adoption of methods of mass-communication leads to a certain initial lowering of standards in any society. The printing press, the radio, the film function far ahead of human alignment. Technology might put you on the moon but you are as yet man on the moon—nothing different. Emerson said "Wherever you go you take yourself." Whether we have been as wise in adopting these mass-media to our conditions as we ought to have been is no longer in doubt. In twenty years we have proved to ourselves that we have not. We are managing to become sub-sub-standard and there is as yet no sign that we are interested in or exercised about pulling up.

Reflect on the fact that Mahesh Yogi was a nine weeks' wonder of communications world. The way our publicists built him up and then the haste with which they dropped him—was it not educative? Is Mahesh Yogi a charlatan or a saint? We did not mind being told what to think, then we did not mind if the question went unanswered. We should perhaps be glad that the Buddha, Socrates, Confucius, Jesus Christ did not live in days of mass-media like ours.

A denial of the need for standards is as much a sign of the times as the lack of standards itself. This finds expression in the intolerance the general run of the Indian citizens have for criticism—any criticism be it political, literary, cultural, even philosophical. To run from one extreme to the other is easy when you lack standards and when the utility of criticism is denied. This I am able to see is what is happening all round us.

D. H. Lawrence fighting his own battles in England said: "People allow themselves to feel a certain number of finished feelings. This feeling only what you allow yourselves to feel at last kills all capacity for feeling and in the higher emotional range you feel nothing at all. This has come to pass in our present century. We do not have a sense of lacking them." Substitute instead of feeling, feeling, intellect and intelligence, you describe the Indian scene especially as it portrays the Indian readers.

Since my main interest is literature I shall finish this rather painful essay with something about Shakespeare. It was said that almost at the beginnings of English literature, in the society of his day, Shakespeare discovered that quality extended vertically through the social scale, not horizontally at the upper general economic or academic levels. A writer in India today discovers that quality is not to be found either vertically or horizontally; it is conspicuous by its very absence.

This seems to me to be the problem. Or is it no problem?



The Other Man's Job

BIMALA PROSAD MUKERJI

WHETHER infrequently we look at ourselves as the mirror is held up to our face, we see some of our weaknesses and laughabilities and feel some sort of satisfaction. But as we are tempted to scrutinise we have also the feeling that all is not right with the world we have fashioned that behind the charming wreaths of smiles, there seem to be a few ugly wrinkles and creases. A few anxious moments then the mist gathers and the disconcerting features are blurred out in the soft haze of returning complacency. So we look at ourselves and laugh again. But if while laughing we look into ourselves less superficially, a few scales might fall and do our eyes good. And then we could laugh more boldly, more confidently and one who laughs last, as we all know laughs best.

But let us give up metaphor and try to spot the lurking evil that causes at once irritation and amusement. For unless we diag-

nose it, we shall never get at the root of the malady that seems innocuous but has a nasty habit of mild dissemination. Left unchecked it grows and spreads choking and killing in the process the healthiest of systems. 'The Other Man's Job' is one such thing—a cry that is symptomatic of some deep mal-adjustment. Starting as a personal idiosyncrasy or at best an inoffensive excuse, it has affected our domestic life and is running to a civic fault if not actually forming into a public attitude.

For most of the work that seems to be being done around us is just half-done indifferently done or not done at all. And when ultimately it is done a large part of it had better be undone. If one asks why it has not been done properly, pat comes the reply 'I did my share, the rest is the other man's job.' This is of course, the quickest and easiest way of getting out of a hole. When a particular person

is requested to do something or have it done the responsibility is his. And it does not and should not cease with his part of the work done by passing it on to somebody else. Don't we do that too often? And we think we are wise in setting the ball rolling for others to pick up. The thing is—it is hardly ever picked up, it is simply kept rolling. So we sit quiet letting it drift till it loses itself in those careless undergrowths of collective indifference.

We seem to think it's only fools who bother and worry about getting things done. Busy men, intelligent men must need delegate some of their work or authority to the next in rank and if they fail to follow up, it is their fault. Is not that the stock argument? Now just think for a moment and tell me please—if that kind of explanation is not just a cover, an inexactitude of mind that helps hide ourselves behind laziness, if not ignorance

Wrong thinking. Is it an undignified, though vicious way of dealing with your own responsibility by shifting it to another person? How would you feel, for instance when you come back home after a most tiring day at office and find things in a perfect mess? What you would love to have is a nice cold shower-bath and some strong fresh coffee before you sit down to write that stinker to the deedy friend of yours who been getting fresh with you, touching you a loan again. You anticipate a quiet, cosy evening and what you actually get is piffers.

Just as the electric pump is not working. You had asked your man to attend to it with the whole day before him. But the young man in his intimate not to keep his girlfriend waiting at the machine just forgot to ring up for a mechanic. In view of this pressing engagement he had asked his country cousin that worthy nephew of yours who has come up to you on an incidental and idle do the needful. And he did it by staying out a couple of hours looking at posters and sign-boards and witnessing a gruesome accident which he naively insists on reciting in detail. The servant now returns and announces the stores are closed this being a half-day. No bath no coffee for you. So half-resigned and full miserable you go to your study and look for stamps. No matter how many skins have fallen that letter must be written tonight specially when you are in a proper devastating mood.

But the stamps are not

there! Your daughter, entrusted with the job, had passed it on to her dashing brother and she, poor creature, whose terrible headache no amount of aspirin could set right had spent the entire afternoon in a darkened room bathing her eyes and temples and flooding her friends on the phone with 'lovely' and 'wonderful' news, all so emotion-

bit of trusting other people over her head and then blaming her roundly for all that happens. Isn't she always told you so? And don't you find it perfectly maddening? Then the housemaid quietly steps in and gives you some stamps she brought on her own. You take them with a glum face, without even thanking her, and leave the room



ally and intellectually important. Your servant normally oblivious and somnolent how could he remembered your commission. But then he had no ironies on him and he could not possibly disturb the mistress in the middle of her beauty sleep. To which your wife hitting in fact is plausible exception because firstly with her figure she can't afford to have even forty winks and secondly you have the most objectionable ha-

with as much dignity as conditions permit.

If this is not an infrequent occurrence in many homes what better can we expect in public life where there is plenty of material and scope for shifting the onus and fixing the fault? Let us make a random sampling and see how things move. I hope I am not being malicious if I say that in most cases you will be made to stand and wait before the gentleman behind the counter con-

descends to take any notice of you. Of course, he is busy and looks too important to give you prompt attention. You feel like gently putting it to him that it is nice to be important but much more important to be nice. But then you hold yourself in patience and place your case before him. He takes quite a long time over it, giving you a pleasant illusion that the end of your trouble is in sight. He hums, he sighs, then drags himself out from the chair and walks over to another table. For about ten minutes you find the two persons deeply engaged, probably in discussing the weather or the latest song-hit. Then he gives you a distant hopeful look, and makes a move but only to fade and dissolve. Tired and impatient you ask one of his colleagues what has happened and explain your case over and over again. He smiles knowingly and tells you in confidence it is not his but some other man's job. So you come away much obliged.

A friend of mine once had the unfortunate occasion to go to a municipal office. A peaceful and law-abiding citizen, he had done all that needed to be done in forms and fees. As a creature, grudging on two rightful legs, he had used his hand, his tongue and done everything except going down on his knees. But the sanction for some minor alteration in his building would not come. He had worn down his shoes in walking up and getting down for full three months. One morning his luck did turn and the clerk confided in all seriousness that the case was

getting ready. 'Where was it so long then?' My friend ventured to ask. The clerk pointed to a table in the corner and said with a beatific smile, 'over there'. He also volunteered the information that my friend would gain nothing by rushing it. Any effort to expedite was nothing but indecent hurry. He was only the clerical clerk, he had done his job by passing on the file. It had travelled across six tables in three months. With the signature of the sanctioning authority waiting to be affixed the case would be complete in another month or so. Why, on all lucks that you get it so quick and cheap! My friend who happens to be college teacher told me he now understood why Stephen Leacock wrote of a Bank account opened and closed, 'immediately after'.

This is unadorned fact. Have not some of you seen the same endless movement of files, heard the same excuse, 'It is the other man's job'? It is a bitter experience for many to see how few people come forward to give a little extra help or advice, how very few men in the chain would touch a file that belongs to another table. Yet a little co-ordinated effort without being a stricken for convention would save the public unnecessary delay or harassment. What we plead for is not a great effort but continual little efforts which can only be made on principle. For as the saying goes, 'Good business is business with profits to both sides', and if a party come away disgusted with dilatory methods, it means the other's

loss of goodwill & reputation. And what remains after reputation is gone? Something that is 'past surgery'.

Let us not forget that real and practical efficiency can never be built on sectional lines. If it is work, it is something whole and entire. The emphasis should be on the 'job' not on its qualifying accident, the other man's. By varying the slant we see that few timely-served doses of intelligent co-operation can cure most of the annoying ills of domestic or civic business or national life.

I am afraid all this looks like sermon. But don't you agree that most of the time we are openly or covertly doing what we loudly condemn or criticise? Fault of the system, you would say. But the system or environment is not to be blamed so much as the thoughts we think, the ways we follow or the words we say. A system is worth as much as the men who work it. A good workman is neither a hater nor a shirker. He prefers to be judged by his work rather than by what he has to say about it. And that work is his as well as his master's. Troubles there must be when the work is divided. But troubles which are tackled instead of being passed around and talked about will disappear.

Besides why should we quarrel with the system? It is not half so bad as it is made out to be. Who made it? Surely, ourselves. When we found it better to work in pairs in order to expedite results. There is nothing wrong in the principle of the thing. Division of labour for the sake of



WHEN IT'S WORK

efficiency, specialisation of talent or aptitude, concentration of trained effort, these have been long tested and accepted principles. The mischief started when we sought to stir the operational technique to our selfish ends. Then we swore by the system, displayed ourselves and donned evasive tactics. It paid us to make a fetish of it, so we touched up its face and made a false god. When a machine goes wrong it is the workman who must repair it and give it a fresh lease of life. And the workman must know it is as much his job as any body else's to set it vibrating. The pity is—we know how to divide and foist we do not like to learn how to co-ordinate without clash. Bureaus and committees and departments are not undemocratic as such. The system cracks and halts because we do not co-operate and would like to keep it a headmaster, soulless body to browbeat others. This is a shelter for unwilling incompetence.

To what length such unimaginative lack of co-ordination can go is well illustrated by an anecdote. There is a story that once three men were sent up by a country for food and fat research abroad. A few months later, they were

strangely and pathetically stranded because the department in question either forgot or failed to secure the sanction of the Finance Department. Now these men prayed and appealed for speedy action and their notes continued to receive official attention at home. Being Government men nobody would touch them. So six months of worry, agony and starvation considerably reduced their fat and even if they managed to return poor and lean as church-mice. When asked about their mission they used to reply grimly: 'It was not food-research, just search—traffic search for food.' If some of you have read that delightful satire by Compton Mackenzie you will know what I mean. It is the 'Red Tape worm'. You can't take it out and kill it. It moves on and thrives though it breaks.

Now can't we try to lift ourselves from this rut? That acceptance of things never brought any good. We might take the trouble of asking ourselves why we do it—why for instance we fall in line with slogans and processions without knowing the reasons why; for instance, we long to talk and platitudes at that and not learn to listen why we crave for noise and speed turn pub-

lic places into litter, violate traffic-rules and unthinkingly shift our own responsibility to somebody else almost in reflex action.

The 'other man's job' is not only a lame excuse but an old one flagrant elementary boring as chronic headache or perpetual want. It doesn't explain, it doesn't hide successfully. I suppose it's only when men are low down and frustrated lose faith in their work and themselves that they acquire some convenient formula, some cheap philosophy to cover inaction. He is tempted to leave things as they are. Because none will thank him or pay him more if he tries to mend or finish. The world itself is a bureaucracy where there is plenty of people to look after the job of minding it somehow. Meanwhile everybody for himself the other man to do it and good luck to the fool who cares and bothers.

Such a state of mind is cynical fatalistic and definitely anti-social. If we have the habit of getting ready planning the details in advance and do some supervision in between we may have better results. Trust begets trust and one must know the art of drawing out the best. And above all one must avoid

extremes. Laziness or indulgence is as bad as slave-driving or thoughtless arrogance. For a departmental head who is a whole-hogger for work and does everything himself, his subordinates standing well aside is only a step-dance, while the boss whose unreasonable demands keep his men in perpetual pig-dance is at best a bully. Both kill initiative by mis-handling.

Are you bored stiff with such clichés? But these are honest truths that bear re-telling. Courtesy weeks or safety weeks will not instil an ounce of commonsense unless we have the commonsense to look into ourselves occasionally instead of looking on at others. I know as you all know the other man's job is more or less a thankless job. But with a little will

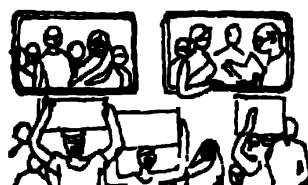
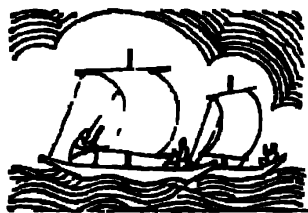
and effort, we can make it our own job. Then we shall say, 'Why not I?' instead of 'Why should I?' And if we are really busy with too many things and have to depend, we can make the other man's job important and interesting by thanking him sincerely. It seems we are reluctant to acknowledge to give credit to any other agent than Heaven. But then, 'Thank God' is just an expression. We don't mean it—it is sheer nervous habit. To be serious there are varieties of jobs—a man's job, a woman's job and a child's job though not so easy. The other man's job belongs to a different category. It is unique, untouchable! We recognise it not as fact, but only as excuse.

I have often wondered what would happen if one

sought to handle what is really the other man's job! Disaster, I suppose, as happened with Three Men On A Bummel. That's why I gratefully leave the daily marketing to my cook who knows his job, because after three or four trials, I was declared unfit and even suspected of tinkering the prices!

I have also learnt another thing and you can have it. If you want any thing done safely and smoothly select a busy man—the other kind has no time.

Now let us wind it up in good humour and say it with Milton. 'They also serve who stand and wait.' The poet's idea of service by the way is not merely grand it is also comforting—for those who prefer to remain blind!



The festive season is here.

Nature sends her message through various agencies—the clear blue sky, the white clouds, the golden sunshine, the ripening corn, the lush green meadows. The gentle air brings the news—the festive season has begun.

It is time to forget yesterday's weariness and go out on a pleasure-packed holiday. For those away from home, it is time to return.

We wish them all a happy and comfortable journey.



EASTERN RAILWAY



The Problem of National Security

Dr JAYANTANUJA BANDYOPADHYAYA

THE problem of our national security has assumed great importance in the last decade or so. For many years after independence it was thought by our foreign and defence policy makers that Pakistan posed the major threat, if not the only threat, to our national security. The increasing Chinese hostility towards India beginning with the border incursions and culminating with the invasion of 1962 proved this assessment of our security problem to be grossly misjudged. Evidences of Sino-Pakistani collusion against India, though of a somewhat indirect character, have been visible since the early sixties and have naturally to enter into our security calculations. Broadly speaking there seems to be a consensus of opinion in our country today that our defence and foreign policies must be based on the recognition of a combined threat by China and Pakistan to our security.

In this context a certain amount of fresh thinking has naturally been taking place regarding the proper diplomatic and military means necessary for effectively safeguarding our national security. Some have even challenged the very basis of the policy of non-alignment followed by

India so far and advocated some form of alignment with one of the power blocs so as to deter China and Pakistan from committing aggression on India. Following the development of nuclear weapons by China there has also been a consistent demand by certain sections of the people for a similar programme in India. There have been proposals for a joint nuclear umbrella. The Soviet Union probably anticipating a further aggravation of its conflict with China has gone to the extent of proposing an Asian security system against China. It is therefore necessary to examine the bases of India's policy of non-alignment and of her defence policy in the light of the changing international

in defence or in diplomacy, and it would not have been rational for her to think in terms of safeguarding her long-term security by joining a military bloc and thus becoming a camp follower of another big power. This basic fact of geography cannot be altered and has to be constantly kept in view while re-examining our security problem.

The interests of economic development also indicated a policy of non-alignment with military blocs. Development planning had to take place within the framework of constitutional democracy and the regimented mobilization of resources for rapid economic development was ruled out. Yet the needs of defence as well as of internal security made it imperative to telescope economic development within a few decades. Therefore the dependence on foreign aid had necessarily to be heavy. It was necessary, both in order to maximize the inflow of foreign aid and in order to avoid political pressure from the aid-giving countries and the resulting loss of state sovereignty, to diversify and disperse the sources of aid as much as possible. This basic determinant of non-alignment also remains unchanged today.

The given international milieu, moreover, made a

Security and Non-alignment

With her vast territory, population and natural resources India is potentially a great power and was so in 1947. It would therefore have been irrational for India to think in terms of her security in the same way as to, for example, the East European Scandinavia, Latin American or the smaller states of Western Europe have done. By the very logic of her size and power potential, India was destined to have an independent policy, whether

THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL SECURITY

policy of non-alignment the only rational choice open to India. The cold war set in soon after India became independent, and if India joined one of the power blocs with a view to preserving her territorial integrity she would have run the constant risk of getting both her territorial integrity and internal security destroyed by a general war among the big powers. At the same time the military and political stalemate among the big powers brought about by the cold war, the existence and relatively effective functioning of the United Nations, and the emergence of the Afro-Asian states as an important factor in international politics made it possible for India to try to safeguard her territorial security partly through a skilful diplomacy. During the last few years there have been growing evidences of a U.S.-Soviet rapprochement but this has also made the old thinking in terms of military alliances and counter-alliances proportionately outmoded. The recent trend towards multipolarity visible in international politics is therefore no argument for a new policy of alignment.

India's domestic milieu at the time of independence was also not conducive to security thinking in terms of military alliances. Freedom came at the end of a powerful national movement which was broadly opposed to any alliance political or military with either the West or the Soviet Union and in favour of an independent and somewhat romanticist foreign policy. A military alliance with the West would have appeared to be a be-

trayal of the freedom movement and antagonized large sections of people, which would have been highly detrimental to internal security especially at a time when Communist insurrectionary movements had been developing in certain parts of the country. A military alliance with the Soviet Union on the other hand would possibly have led to a similar nationalist reaction and equally jeopardized internal security. There would also have been a real danger in the second case in view of the global objectives of the Soviet Union of internal subversion through the direct aid and assistance of the Soviet Government. Although the original fervour of the national movement has probably disappeared to a large extent, the present polarization of the political forces in the country presents the same kind of problem for our internal security which is vitally linked with external security.

Thus the facts of geography, economic development, the international milieu and the domestic milieu all combined to make non-alignment the only rational policy for India from the security point of view at the dawn of independence and these basic factors have not changed so radically as to warrant the abandonment of the policy of non-alignment. This does not necessarily mean however, that we have not made any mistakes in the detailed formulation and implementation of our foreign and defence policies from the security point of view. To what extent India has been able to combine her defence and foreign policies

for safeguarding the security of the country can best be judged by a retrospective glance at our China policy.

China and India's Security

In 1950 India could not have prevented the Chinese occupation of Tibet militarily even if she wanted to do so. The small Indian army was poised against the Pakistani army in Kashmir. More important is the fact that the defence of Tibet involved the containment of China at the China-Tibet border, which would have been an impossibility even for a big military power based in India. Indian diplomacy in the fifteen years was therefore, aimed at making the best of a bad job, keeping India-China relations as near to normal levels as possible and gaining time for economic and military progress. The policy I think was basically well-conceived although there may be some doubt as to whether Tibet should have been legally recognized as a region of China in the 1954 Agreement.

I think the mistakes made by India in her China policy during this period from the security point of view were mainly two. In the first place, no attempt was made in 1950 or 1954 to get the traditional India-China border and the McMahon Line recognized by China. A skilful Indian diplomacy might have succeeded in achieving this objective during this period had the attempt been made. Secondly, Indian diplomacy was not buttressed by the minimum necessary military preparation. Fortunately, the Himalayas are largely impenetrable, and all that

THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL SECURITY

India needed for a minimum defence preparation was a few lightly equipped mountain divisions which might not have been beyond India's economic capability what was needed was more of structural readjustment than of additional investment. At any rate this degree of preparation was unavoidable, considering the geographical configuration of our northern frontier. We were defeated by China in 1962 on the eastern front not because we did not spend anything on defence, but because we made the wrong kind of preparation. Poorly equipped land forces were sent up to the high mountains to fight against crack Chinese divisions thoroughly trained in mountain warfare and our military intelligence system failed miserably. Our military success in the war with Pakistan in 1965 against superior weapons proved that in conventional warfare Indian troops are inferior to none. India's failure against China in 1962 in other words was in my opinion a failure of our defence strategy rather than our diplomacy although in underestimation of Chinese motives on the part of Nehru and Krishna Menon may have contributed to a mistaken defence policy. This defect however seems to have been largely rectified since 1962 within the ambit of the policy of non-alignment.

The Future Perspective

As the situation stands today two facts are staring us in the face. China is in occupation of approximately 15,000 square miles of our territory, and she has developed nuclear weapons.

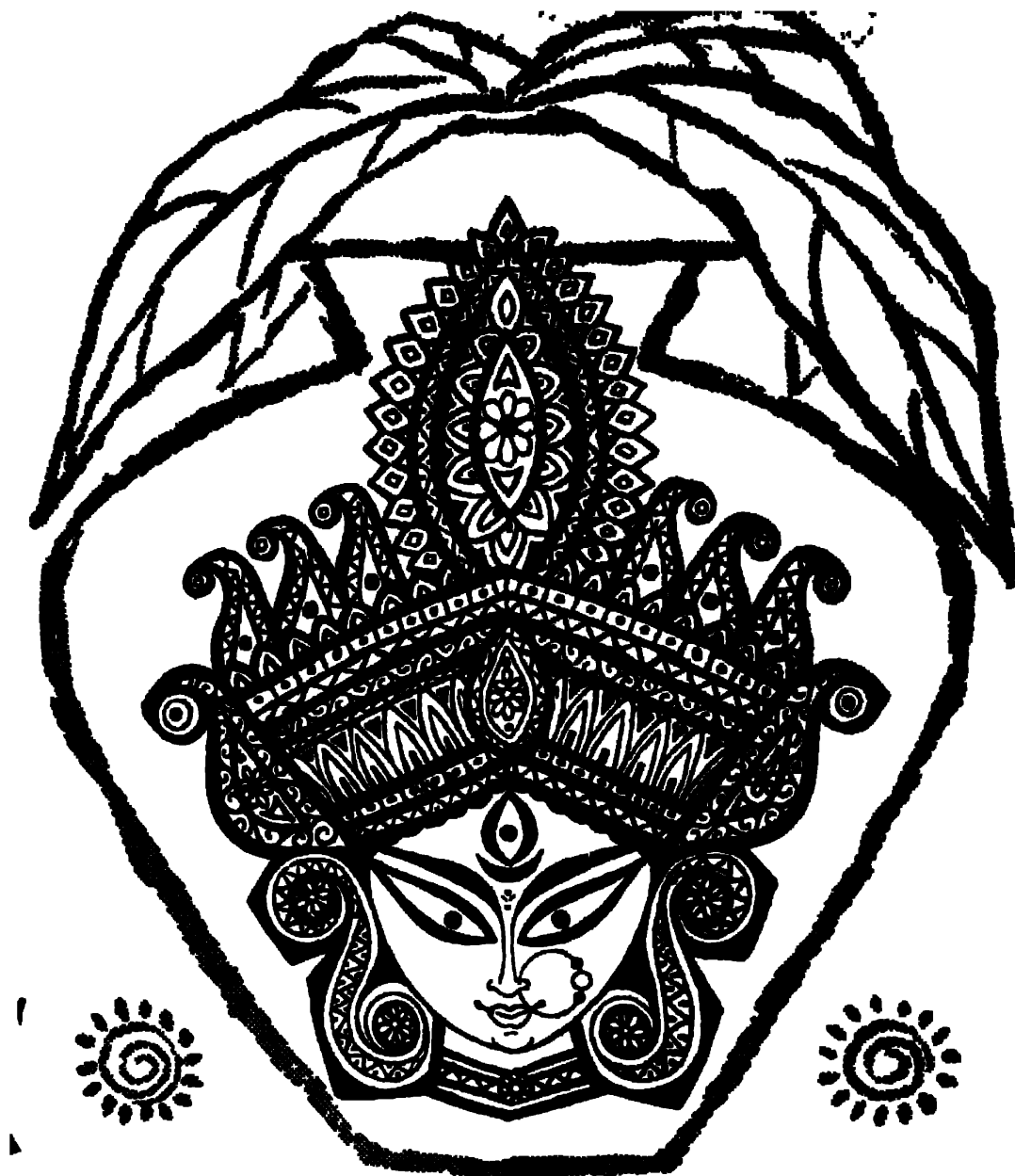
As regards the first point I think the Government of India have wisely made a distinction between a limited violation of territorial integrity and a full scale invasion of the country by China and desisted from entering into a general war against China. Whatever the Chinese may think today Mao Tse-tung is not really immortal and after him (and even in his lifetime) there may be a change in Chinese policy towards India and the possibility of a negotiated settlement of the territorial question cannot be altogether ruled out.

As regards the threat posed by China's nuclear weapons I am again in agreement with the broad strategy adopted by the Government of India. While not entering into an immediate nuclear race with China and running our economic development in the process we should keep the question open and gradually create the overheads and technical know-how which would enable us to switch over from peaceful to military use of nuclear energy at a relatively short notice. From this point of view India's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty despite pressure from both the power blocs has been a step in the right direction.

The withdrawal of the British from the Singapore naval base will undoubtedly increase the naval threat from China in the long run. But this also does not justify our thinking in terms of a military alliance with either of the two major power blocs. In the first place the Chinese navy is as yet in an undeveloped state and will be considerably handicapped by the

presence of the US navy near Taiwan in approaching the Indian Ocean through the Straits of Malacca. Secondly, it is difficult to see how India's participation in a military alliance would enable a big power to establish a naval base in Singapore. What India needs for her long-term defence against China in the Indian Ocean is a reasonably good naval base in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands which will guard the approach to the Indian Ocean through the Straits of Malacca. Nor is the recent Soviet proposal for an Asian security system against China either practicable or desirable. Even if we assume that India would be willing to join such a system it is extremely doubtful whether other countries like Japan would do so. Besides, without big power participation the military balance will not change while participation by major powers in such a system would only lead to greater insecurity and loss of sovereignty in the region. It would also not be in India's long-term interests to pursue a policy of permanent confrontation with China on the military plane.

If India can raise a few mountain and guerrilla divisions and gradually build up a reasonably good naval base in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands she should be able to contain single-handed any attack either from Pakistan or from China. In the event of joint aggression by these two countries on our soil, the conflict will at once assume international dimensions, and big powers will be inevitably involved in it even without any specific treaty obligations.



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BALI— The Island Of The Gods

Prof T. A. DAVIS

ONE of the over 3000 islands that constitute Indonesia is the enchanting Bali which was praised by Prime Minister Nehru as 'The world's morning, its Last Paradise'. Indian settlers came to this as well as other S-E Asian islands about 2000 years ago and named it 'Balin' which in Sanskrit means strong. When Islam overcame Hinduism in Java in the 16th century, Bali became a refuge for some of the Hindus from Java. Since then the small island has remained the only stronghold for Hinduism and a seat of ancient civilization.

Bali has a population of two million whose main religion is Hinduism with a blending of Buddhism and animism or primitive worship. Balinese believe that mountains, rivers, lakes, trees and most other Nature's creations have spirits—good and evil—and



Fig 1. A puppet of the shadow play known as Wayang puppet.

these spirits are worshipped in the more than 50 thousand temples and shrines the island is studded with. They have different prayers and offerings for the good and evil spirits, as well as for different occasions. Special prayers are recited when paddy grains are placed on wet mats to germinate, again after 42 days when the young seedlings are removed from the mats and planted in irrigated rice fields, and also when the paddy is harvested. Paddy is cut straw by straw with a small knife hidden in the palm of the reaper's hand, so that the good spirit who lives in

the rice plant may not be frightened.

Legend says that at the beginning of time, the Balinese had no food except the juice of sugarcane. Taking pity on them, Vishnu the god of fertility came down to earth in disguise and raped an unwilling mother Earth who later gave birth to rice. Thus rice came to them as a gift from the gods and Vishnu's wife, Dewi Sri became its goddess. The Gunung Agung, the volcanic peak in northern Bali which supplies nutrients to the rice fields from its deposits of lava streams is the holy residence of their gods. The

BALI—THE ISLAND OF THE GODS

Balinese are extremely grateful to the gods for the island they are given to live and the food they are given to nourish their bodies.

So much so the people of Bali express their gratitude to the gods by offering all the good things they enjoy. Small offerings of flowers, boiled rice and fruits are made by housewives in front of the house-temple and also on a little altar in the wall. The gifts on the ground are meant as an insurance against the attack of evil spell of roaming evil spirits who may enter any unguarded place but usually it is immediately consumed by some stray dogs, which nobody seems to object or take seriously. If the evil spirits are lurking in these animals no doubt, they are the rightful recipients of the offerings. During festivals women carry arrays of offerings—some of them almost a metre high and weighing over 25 kgs. They usually consist of baskets of richly decorated cakes, sweetmeats, and fruits piled like pyramids with colourful flower decorations at the top (coconuts, rice, onions, melons, oranges, bananas, roasted chickens and a score of things all arranged carefully on woven palm leaves one over the other. When the priest rings a little bell the women enter in a row with their sumptuous headloads to be blessed by the priest who sprinkles consecrated water on them.

Now it is regarded that the gods enjoy the inviting aroma of the good things which are later consumed with full human appetite and gusto by the devotees. For important feasts, the

Balinese make very delicious preparations with rice, coconut and meat. Other attractions are—small lumps of pork dipped in spicy sauce, chicken wrapped in banana leaves and cooked under fire, roasted flying ants, germinated lentils, crushed peanuts, bread, fruits, greens, and tropical fruits like papaya, pineapple, jackfruit, durian, djambu, mango, salak (a pear-shaped palm fruit with a nutty flavour), rambuttans (a juicy fruit covered by a hairy fleshy skin), and small oranges. They drink with their food a mild palm wine called *tuak* and a sweet snack called *brum*.

During festivals the musicians of the gamelan orchestra gather around with their saphones, bronze bells, finger drums, flutes and two-stringed violins and percussion instruments of the gamelan orchestra and bring forth a rhapsody of enthralling music. The orchestra may give concerts accompany stage plays, shadow plays and dance. The musicians are the farmers, artisans and shopkeepers for in Bali each and every one has some artistic avocation like dancing, playing one or other of the instruments or conducting a puppet show. Each village has its own cultural guild where most of the young men gather in the evenings for orchestra rehearsal and dancing lessons. Special schools give training for the Dalangs, as the master of the shadow play is called. Shadow play or the Wayang puppet show originated in central Java from where it has spread to the neighbouring countries. The puppet company

travels from village to village. A white screen is laid on a stage and behind it the Dalang and the orchestra are seated. Most of the shadow plays offer lessons of courage, loyalty and virtue. The spectators watch enraptured and fully identify themselves with the show and the different characters portrayed on the screen. To an imaginative people, a shadow can be more powerfully evocative than a character in a film.

Dancing is given much encouragement and forms an important item in religious and social festivities. Young girls attired in gold embroidered silk shawls wrapped tightly around their bodies with magnificent head decorations of fragrant flowers—the champak, jasmine and others. These elaborate embroidered garments are so richly decorated that sometimes one piece takes several years for completion. The dancers perform the pantomime Legend dance with graceful movements during which the silent language of their hands is supplemented by the story-teller who narrates the story of the ballet. The range of Balinese dance themes is astonishing. They dance the traditional dances of legendary stories of the ancient epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Balinese versions of Malay legends, and love stories, usually the theme run in the form of heroic fights against evil spirits. They have fantastic disguises of monsters with masks like ants, mals, witches, kings, gods and heroic and wicked men. They also perform fire dances, dagger dances, and the recently introduced

ed demonstrative dances and musical comedies.

Usually in a dance session, the climax is the Kot-chak (Monkey dance) where more than 100 half-naked men sit around, twisting and clapping their hands. They chant rhythmic, syncopated staccate songs and cries of 'tjak tjak monkey cries and the wailing of evil spirits. The dancers get into ecstasy and are hypnotised by the sounds and movements. In their trance they are supposed to heal and repeat the wishes of their ancestors and gods.

Keeping fighting cocks is not only leisure time activity but prestige symbol of the men in Bali. Much time is spent in tending them and carrying them around in special cages. They are displayed on great festival days and special occasions when cock-fights are arranged and also during certain weekends when big thatched sheds are constructed and the villagers bring their birds for competition. They are passionately fond of games of chance particularly betting at cock fights.

The Balinese are a hardy, some people, frank, courteous, gay and with fond of poetry, music, dancing and festivals. There has been recently a decline in festivals due to changing social attitudes, economic progress and rising population. They are extraordinarily clever in art and crafts. For important functions like wedding and other receptions, they weave out of the young coconut leaves various kinds of cups, dishes and boxes to serve sweets and delicacies. They also make intricate, artistic shapes in various designs out of co-



Fig 2. Equine enclosures made of tender coconut leaves

conut leaves to serve different kinds of fruits and flowers. Their artistic talent is also displayed in the sculpture, painting, silverwork, wood and bone carving, and leather work. Puppets for shadow plays are made from processed buffalo hide and they last for more than a century. Patterns are hand punched on the side by means of chisels and slotting machines.

In Bali women have equal rights with men in the home. She has the authority to deal with the things she earns through domestic industry like weaving baskets, bags, decorative garments, curries, etc. The house, rice fields, oxen and tools however belong to the husband. A

husband can put in a claim for divorce if his wife is with another man or if, on the other hand, a wife may get a divorce if her husband is cruel or unable to provide for her. The Balinese women dress like their Muslim counterparts in brightly coloured sarong draped round their hips and a jacket called *kebaya* (pronounced *kupaya*) and a shawl.

The people of Bali firmly believe in reincarnation, and so cremation of the dead is the occasion of a happy and most sacred duty to liberate the soul. There is more rejoicing than mourning in funerals. When a person dies they fix small mirrors on the eye-lids, little pieces of steel on the teeth, fragrant

jasmine flowers in the nostrils and iron nails in all the limbs so that the soul may be reborn stronger and more beautiful having eyes as clear as mirrors and limbs and teeth strong as steel and fragrant breath. The body is taken out of the house through a hole in the wall and different sets of pall-bearers stuff the body quickly from hand to hand so that the

spirit of the dead may be confused about the orientation of the way back to the house. Expensive gifts are placed with the body on the funeral pyre and fire is lit by means of a burning glass.

A visitor to this enthralling island cannot miss the Monkey Forest, about fifteen miles from Den Pasar, the chief town of Bali. As soon as one reaches the

entrance to the forest, a few wayside stalls come into view where charming Balinese girls sell fruits, cold drinks and nuts. Usually several girls carry baskets of peanuts with other girls accompanying them with long sticks. When the visitors evince desire to see the Monkey Forest two girls volunteer to accompany them for a small fee. Already at the entrance troops of monkeys, young and old await the arrival of the visitors. The visitors throw handfuls of the nuts from the basket to the monkeys who scramble for them and eat them fearlessly sitting quite close to the visitors. When an aggressive monkey tries to grab from the basket by jumping over the girl who carries the nut the other girl comes to her rescue by chasing these offenders with the stick. The monkeys are friendly as long as the nuts last. The stick bearer is there also to protect the visitors from any untoward behaviour of the monkeys.

European and American artists have flocked in considerable numbers to this island and Tbud in the foothills north of Den Pasar is the centre of their colony.

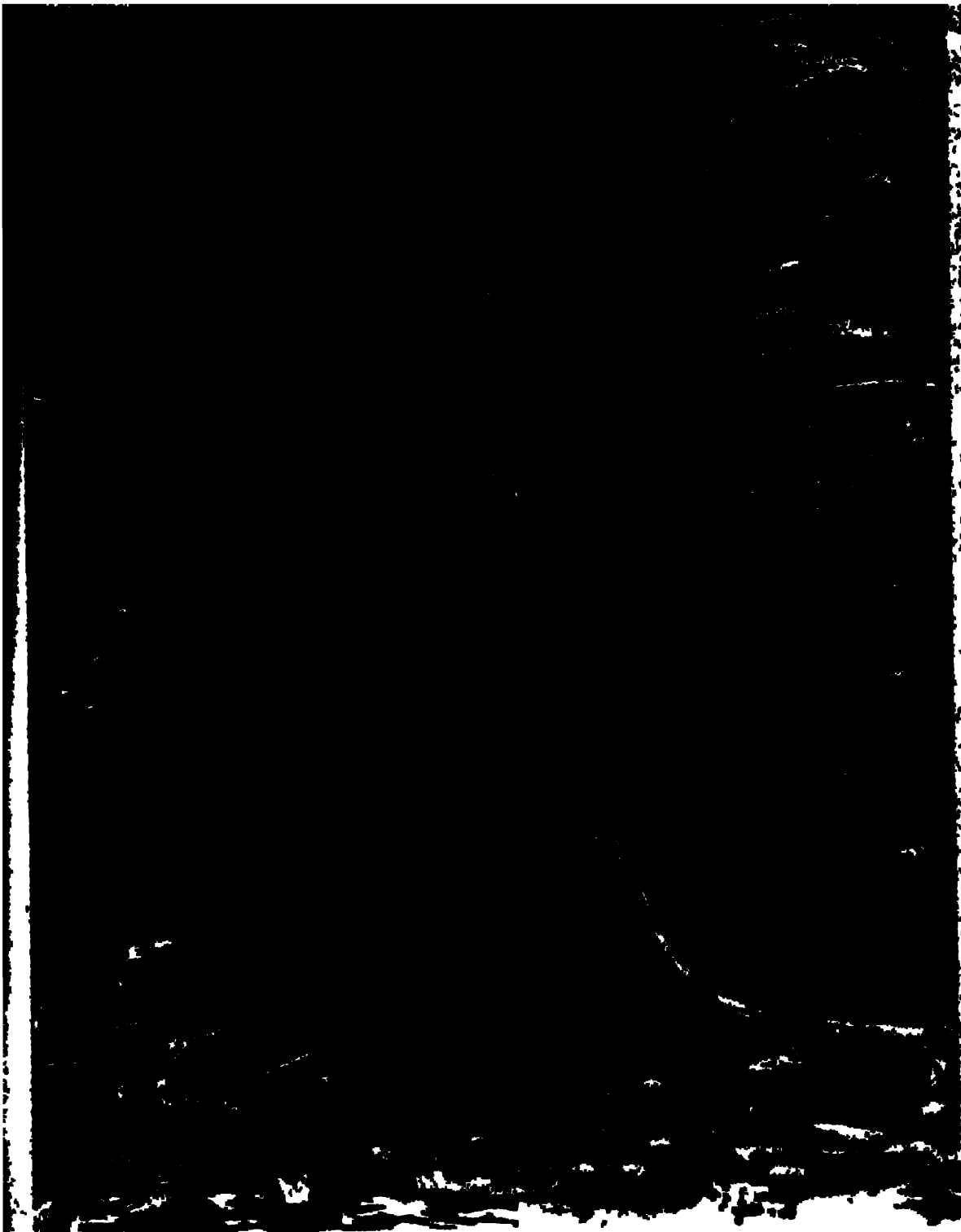
One cannot predict how long Bali will continue to retain its purity and simplicity and when it will be larded by material civilization and political conflicts as in the other neighbouring lands. Young Balinese girls are already seen in Western costumes riding bicycles. Overhead wires, telephones and television structures may soon mar the rural beauty of this land of the gods.

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By Rabindra Nath Tagore

A LONELY SOUL

Courtesy Rabindra Seden
Sentinketan

Sept 1980



THE BUDDHA

By
P. LAL

ONE of the many legends that circle around the Buddha's life says that his mother Maya left for her parents' home during the first day of her pregnancy for this was then the custom. On the way she felt hungry for Papiya to help her reach the flower and branch of a tree she had obtained from her mother. As she reached for the branch, the tree bent graciously, soft breeze blew in her scented face. Her attention was so fully devoted to the tree that she was not aware with her of the beauty of the flowering branch when the Buddha was born in springtime, on the full moon day of the month of Vaisakh 563 B.C. His father was Rabi Suddhodana, Maya and Papiya were Suddhodana's wife. Maya was forty-five when the Buddha was born. He was named Suddhartha Gautama.

It was decided that the nurse for Suddhartha, the "Blessing of the World" should be neither too tall for in that case the neck of the infant would get strained nor too short for that would bend his body nor too large for that would constrict his legs nor too weak for that would not give his body the firmness it needed. Her breasts should not be too full, for then her hot milk would flush his skin nor too dark for then her milk would be cold and cause hard and soft lumps on his growing



As she much searching on
the night of the birth of the Buddha

Suddhodana's Brahman wife predicted that the physical condition of a body indicated 'good' for the world and a Buddha. As well as the Four Visions — birth, old age, death and a holy man — he had rights to be born in a noble family.

Suddhartha was married to his beautiful cousin Yasodhara when he was sixteen. The palace — nine stories — seven stories and five stories high — were built for their pleasure. Four thousand dancing girls were provided for Suddhartha's delight. Nothing displeasing or offensive to the senses was brought before him.

One day in spring Suddhartha ordered his hunter to take him to the royal pleasure gardens.

THE BUDDH



As the chariot pulled by four
resplendent horses entered the garden
Siddhartha saw an old bent
man passing by

'Who is this charioteer,
Toothless white-haired tottering
Bones and nerves showing under
skin?'

'An old man, sire
He is weak and helpless
His friends and family have left
him
As buds leave a withered tree'

'Tell me the truth, charioteer—
Did he become this form of
Or does it happen to all?'

'Sure this is the law of nature
It happens to all
Men women and children grow
old
Your parents your friend you
too will grow old'

Angry and disturbed Siddhartha
ordered the charioteer to drive him
back to the palace

A few days later, not far from
the spot where he had seen the old
man, he found a sick man abandoned
beside a road

'And this man charioteer,
This skeleton groaning in pain,
Fouled by his own filth'

'A sick man, sire he suffers,
There is no cure for him,
He will die soon'

Still later he saw a procession
of men carrying a body on a cot

'These men charioteer carrying
That man on a cot of
Dishevelled weeping wailing'

'Sure the man is dead
His parents friends and relatives
He is no more in this world'

'So this is life? Youth into old
age,
Health into decay,
Learned fool miscell it please?'

Siddhartha locked himself for
many days in the palace



THE BUDDHA

When he went again to the pleasure gardens, he saw a monk passing

*"Charioteer, this gracious man
In yellow garments, so serene
He never looks up—who is he?"*

*"A holy man, sire, a bhikkhu
He has no desires, no possessions.
He looks on all with equal eyes."*

*"Good He is a happy man
The learned praise such a man
I would like to be such a man"*

For the first time he returned to his palace with a steady mind

As he descended from his chariot, runners from his father greeted him with a message from the palace

His wife Yasodhara had given birth to a son, and the message of his father was "Announce my joy to my son"

Siddhartha listened, paused and said

*"To me Rahula has been born"
(Rahula in Sanskrit means 'obstacle') So the boy was named Rahula*

He entered the palace. A beautiful cousin, the virginal Kisha Gautami, saw him from an upper window and, struck by his handsome majesty, exclaimed

*"Nibbhuta nuna somata
Nibbhuta nuna sapita
Nibbhuta nuna sanari
Yasya yana i disa pati*

*"Blessed the father
Blessed the mother
Blessed the wife
Of a man so glorious!"*

Siddhartha listened to the beautiful lines and wondered how he should achieve the state of blessedness (for *nibbhuta* meant both "fortunate" and "serene in Nirvana") He unclasped a pearl necklace worth a hundred thousand gold coins, and sent it to her. When told it was for



her, Kisha Gautami thought he had fallen in love with her

Inside the palace, hundreds of elegantly dressed dancing and singing women, instructed by his father, surrounded him. Exquisite music and laughter, designed to chase away the loneliness of luxury, filled the rooms.

He looked at them and was not pleased. He closed his eyes and fell asleep.

They saw him sleeping. "If our lord sleeps let us sleep too," they said to each other. Putting aside their kettle-drums, vinas, finger bells, old flutes, and taking off their anklets, they slept.

He woke at midnight with a start. The oil-filled lamps were sputtering out. Around him he saw wild and violent women, some foaming at the mouth, some grinding their teeth, some mumbling, some yawning, some spitting, some drooling. A room full of living corpses.

"Horrible! O horrible!" he whispered to himself.

THE BUDDHA



He went quickly to the door, opened it, and shouted, "Anyone there?"

"I, Sue, Channa, keeper of the stables."

"Good Channa, saddle me a horse. I am leaving the palace tonight."

Outside the stables stood the magnificent steed Kantaka. His sleek black flanks glistened in the light of Channa's lamp. Saddling Kantaka, Channa brought him to the would-be Buddha.

In the meantime, Siddhartha went to the inner apartment of the palace where his wife Yasodhara was sleeping on a flower-strewn bed, her left hand resting lightly on the infant Rahula.

He stood at the door silent, looking intently at mother and son, thinking.

Then, quickly, he went out to the courtyard, where Channa was waiting for him.

They rode to the bank of the river. Siddhartha asked

Channa, who wept even as he obeyed, to inform his father, his mother, and his people that he had decided to become an ascetic.

"Tell them they must not feel sorry for me."

Siddhartha walked to Rajagriha, capital of Magadha, a city famous for its Brahmin sages and philosophers.

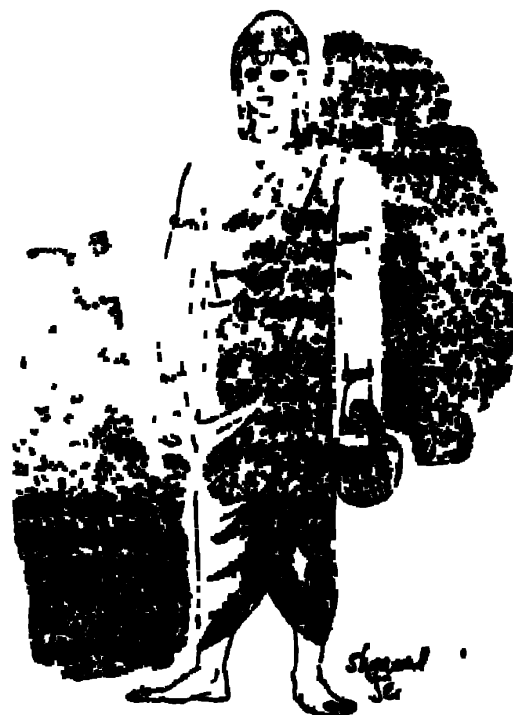
The king of Magadha, Bimbisara, informed by his guards about the arrival of a handsome and dignified mendicant in saffron (for Siddhartha had cut off his hair with his sword and exchanged his royal robe with a beggar's), offered him wealth and invited him to stay in the palace.

Siddhartha declined and proceeded to the Magadhan hill where the wise men lived.

First he studied under Alara, the great Brahmin teacher. But Alara was learned only in the scripture.

Next he went to Uddaka. But Uddaka learned only in metaphysics.

He went to the forest of Uruvela near Bodhi Gaya with five disciples,



THE BUDDHA

anya, Bhaddaj, Mahanama,
and Assaji. There he joined
etics in severe self-mortifica-
for six years.

took food daily equal to the
a sesamum seed. His flesh
his ribs showed the
holy signs appeared on
day. One night, after the third
he collapsed.

village's daughter Sujata
brought him food. He said later,
"It tasted better than the one
brought to me by Sujata."

The ascetics knew only asceti-
cism. Picking up his staff and beg-
ging bowl he left them—and his five
disciples disillusioned left them
with Sujata's food in his hands.
He sat down under the sacred Bodhi-tree
and wanted to eat it undisturbed.

here he was assailed by Mara
the temptress. "Sit down to me," he
said, "with these words—"

*One offering all favored men,
This is your neighbor
with his a thousand and a hundred
in his only two.*

Love!

*Do good and do good
to both and to the reward
by do not struggle.
The world is struggle, hard to struggle
all the time.*

which the holy Siddhartha
replied:

*Why do you pack on me, Mara?
What will I do with goodness
who have faith?*

*I struggle in faith and one,
My faith is my life
So look, my faith like a burning
wind*

*Mying up rivers
will dry up my blood
will dry up everything that
flows.*

*My blood, bile, and phlegm
dry up,*

*I shall sit here,
with tranquil mind,
and steady wisdom
with my weapon. Powerless
against it is your army, O temptress.*



*Bring Lust and Restlessness,
Hunger and Thirst,
Sloth, Covardice, Doubt, Hypo-
crisy—*

Will you win?

He sat under the Bodhi-tree un-
moved while Mara assailed him in-
cessantly. Around him danced a
host of fierce soldiers with spears,
swords, club and diamond maces.
They had heads of hogs, of fish,
asses, horses, snakes, tigers, and dra-
gons. Some had one eye only others
many. They flew and leapt striking
at each other howling and hooting
and whining till the earth shook. The
earth shook like a loving bride
seduced from her husband.

THE BUDDHA



That evening from sunset onward till the next dawn, wisdom slowly came to Siddhartha. He achieved Nirvana at dawn, and as the full experience of truth flashed on him he exclaimed:

*'Anāgataṃ eva aṭam
sopāhaṃ mānā apibhūṇāṃ
gohāṇakāṇāṃ vāṇāṇāṃ
evāhaṇāṇāṃ punaḥ punaḥ —'*

*How many births have I known
Without knowing the builder of
this body!
How many births have I toiled
for him
It is painful to be born again and
again
But now I have seen you O
builder of this body!
All desire is extinct, Nirvana is
attained!
The rafters have crumbled, the
roof-pole is smashed!
You will not build them again!"*
He was now the Buddha.

A voice inside him kept repeating
ing

*Why reveal to the world your
hard-won truth?
Can the lustful and selfish ever
appreciate this truth?
Inexplicable and profound
is the truth now yours,
How can he know it*

*whose mind is full of the
world?"*

But the Buddha rose like a lotus from stagnant water whose petals are unsullied by muddy drops, and saw the world clearly, with a Buddha's serene eyes. He saw the pure men and the impure, the noble and the ignoble, the good listeners and the wicked ones, the seekers of immortality and those contemptuous of it.

And he was moved to pity

*Because he saw mankind drown-
ing in the sea of saṃsāra,
of both death, and sorrow
And because there stirred in his
heart the desire to save
them,*

He was moved to pity

*Because he saw them lost in false
doctrine with none to guide
them*

*And because they wallowed in
the fire lusts and suffered*

He was moved to pity

*Because they clung to their
wealth, their wives, and
their children*

*And because they did not know
how to leave them though
they wanted to leave them*

He was moved to pity

*Because he saw them afraid of
both old age and death,*

*And because they continued to
act in ways that brought
both old age and death,*

He was moved to pity

*Because it was a time of war and
pestilence, killing and mar-
mug,*

*And because they had hatred in
their hearts, for which they
would suffer*

He was moved to pity

*Because some were rich, and
clung to riches,*

*Because some were born, and
would not find the Dhamma,*

*Because some ploughed and sowed,
and bought and sold,*

*And the fruit they reaped was
the bitter one of suffering*

He was moved to pity

Romesh Chunder Dutt

MONI BAGCHEE

THE MARCH 3, 1868. It was the early hours of the morning. The mail steamer *Woolton* was ready in full steam to leave the shores of Diamond Harbour within next few minutes. Among the passengers she carried on that memorable date were three Bengali students. They were friends and each of them was only nineteen years of age. They were sailing for England to compete for the Indian Civil Service. One of them had the permission of his parents but the two others had actually to run away from home under cover of night. The names of the three friends are Surendra Nath Banerjee, Romesh Chunder Dutt and Behan Lal Gupta, the first two were destined to become leaders in their respective spheres.

Three years after, about the end of September 1871 the three successful young men returned to their country and received a warm welcome. Rastananda Surendra Nath in his autobiography *A Nation in Making* has recorded in this context. We had a reception given to us at the Seven Tanks Garden by the public of Calcutta. It was organised by Iswar Chunder Vidyasagar, Keshub Chunder Sen and Kisor Chandra Mitter. Satyendra Nath Tagore was the first Indian Civilian. We were the second batch. The success of three of us on one and



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the same year had created a profound impression upon Indian mind. The whole of Indian Calcutta was present at the function and we were the nucleus of all eye.

Romesh Chunder Dutt was born on the 13th August 1815 as the second son of his parents who belonged to the illustrious Dutt family of Ramlagan in north Calcutta. Romesh Chunder began his career in Service as an Assistant Magistrate of Alipor in 1871. Twelve years after he rose to the rank of District Magistrate and in this capacity he

was in charge of several districts of Bengal between the period 1863 and 1892. These ten years form the most brilliant episode in the whole of his administrative career. In 1894, he was appointed officiating Commissioner of the Burdwan Division and he retired from Service in 1897 as the Commissioner of Orissa. He was the first of his race to attain this distinction. Yet it is a fact that he was not treated with perfect fairness throughout the period of his long service. His friend and colleague Surendra Nath has, therefore,

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rightly observed "This distinguished Civil Servant, such was the reactionary tendency in those days, never rose beyond the position of an officiating Commissioner of a Division" Dutt was an efficient administrator, but at the same time he was a man with an independent outlook and courage of his convictions. This perhaps was one of the reasons why his talent was not recognised or appreciated by the Government in the manner it should have been. That recognition however, came to him from an Indian Prince, the Maharaja of Baroda subsequently, when Dutt was appointed by him as his Prime Minister.

An official career had always been his second love only, other ambitions, literary and national had always exercised a far stronger attraction for him. His biographer tells us that there were two motives which led to his early retirement from service, so honourable, so well paid, and holding out prospects so rich. In the first place Romesh Chunder wished to devote himself whole-heartedly to literary pursuits which he always called his 'first love'. He had formed the ambition of leaving some durable works behind him which his countrymen would value, even after his death. He was then in the fiftieth year of his age, and had earned his pension and he decided to devote the remaining years of his life to earning literary fame than to earning a fortune.

In the second place he wished for greater independence and larger op-

portunities of striving for that progress in self-government, and those liberal reforms for which the time was ripe. His long experience in administration had convinced him that British rule in India could be more efficient and more popular by the admission of the people to a share in the control and direction of the administration. And he felt an irresistible impulse to take part in the national endeavour to secure the share for his countrymen. His subsequent career proves that Romesh Chunder decided rightly in obeying the impulses which he felt within himself.

Thus closed his brilliant career as a public servant in the active service of the Government and the period covered by the years 1898 to 1904 forms the next important episode in his life. We gather from his eventful life story as recorded by Mr. Nathan that from the age of adolescence forward, one single ambition filled his heart and inspired all his efforts. This was to serve his motherland to the best of his ability. Thus the next seven years of his life were spent in England, working unflinchingly in the cause of India.

*

As we recall today sixty years after his death, it appears to us that the life-story of Romesh Chunder Dutt is the story of a myriad-minded leader and a representative Indian in the true sense of the term. His career both in India and England was an unmistakable demonstration of India's capacity to produce a citi-

zen of the highest manhood. His achievements are many and to discuss all of them in course of a single article is simply impossible. We shall, therefore, confine our study to broad outlines only.

As already indicated, literature was his first love and it remained all through life his engrossing passion. When at the threshold of his career, Romesh Chunder found leisure to turn to literary pursuits and tried his pen both in the domain of fiction and in the fields of economics and history. His earliest work, *The Literature of Bengal* is perhaps the most notable performance of Dutt in English during the period of his literary apprenticeship. The great merit of this work is that it was the first scientific attempt to write a history of our national life and literature. It is marked by a breadth of vision and a firm grasp of the main stages of the intellectual life of Bengal from the twelfth century to the nineteenth century and of the outstanding factors which have moulded that life.

Although the bulk of his literary productions is in English yet early in his career Romesh Chunder's thoughts turned to his own mother tongue. He has himself described how he came under the influence of the master mind of the great Bankim Chandra who was a close friend of his father and for whom he had the highest respect and affection since his childhood. Inspired by Bankim Chandra, he first tried his hand in historical novel for the natural bias of Dutt's mind was for history. But, above all, it is

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his own passion for the past glories of his country that is the parent of these novels. "Gentle reader," he exclaimed in one of his novels, "my sole object has been to narrate the glories of our past and the greatness of our national heroes."

His first historical novels—*Banga Bijeta Mahadhaba Kankan*, *Rajput Jnan-Sandhya* and *Maharashtra Ivan-Praia*—cover a period of a hundred years from the middle of the sixteenth century to the reign of Aurangzeb. The third in this series is woven round the story of the heroic struggle of Rana Pratap for the freedom of Mewar against the mighty Muslim while the fourth depicts the rise of the Marhatta's power under Shivaji. The mixture of history with romance of real actors and knowledge of the past is a difficult art and Dutt's novels though they abound in attitudinal scene moving interest and fully developed dramatic situations yet fail to take high rank as works of art because of their lack of originality. But his greatest success is his female characters—beautiful types of the Oriental feminine who borrow the language of Sister Nivedita grow like the tall white lilies of annunciation set in the darkness beside some altar screened from the very glances of the faithful at their prayers.

Later on, breaking free from the traditions of historical romance rendered predominant by the example of Bankim Chandra Dutt turned to a sphere more congenial to his gifts and inclinations and produced two social novels,

Sunay and its sequel *Sunay*. The first appeared in the year 1885 and the second eight years afterwards when he was Commissioner of Orissa. The two together present an admirable picture of the everyday life of Bengal in his times. The chief interest of these stories lies not so much in their character drawing as in the undercurrent of social forces slowly moulding the minds and habit of young Bengal. Indeed it is such problems as widow remarriage and the unmasking of the pleasure class who masquerade in the garb of the defenders of the Hindu orthodoxy which absorb his deepest interest. He is in his historical novels Dutt was writing with a distinct national object in contemplation a true life the true life on which could tell the truth to the world. He is in his historical novels Dutt was writing with a distinct national object in contemplation a true life the true life on which could tell the truth to the world. He is in his historical novels Dutt was writing with a distinct national object in contemplation a true life the true life on which could tell the truth to the world.

The Bengali translation of the *Arjuna* was the first full historical work written by him. This work belongs to an entirely different sphere of art. It is P. N. Chunder had a deep and conviction that a fallen nation can rise again to greatness unless her people feel within them the life-beat of the truly great achievements of their fathers. It was not an easy task to translate the *Arjuna* but the encouragement he received from Bankim Chandra made his task somewhat easier. When the book came out,

both Professor Max Muller and Professor Cowell wrote to congratulate Dutt. It brought him enduring fame and by this single work he has placed Bengal under a deep debt of gratitude.

A History of Civilization in Ancient India (1890) is considered as the most ambitious effort of Dutt's life and it is the one English work, along with his translation of the *Epics*, by which he will be longest remembered. It took him ten years to collect and arrange the materials and he completed the gigantic task of writing this book at the time when he was in charge of the heavy and responsible district of Mymensingh. Immediately after its publication, Dutt's "Ancient History" is the book is popularly known was well received by almost all the well-known Orientalists of the day including Max Muller, Winternitz Barth Oldenberg and many others, and its author at once came to be recognised as an able historian and a sanguine scholar. Written in graceful and expressive English the book has an abiding value and its appeal to the English readers lies in the fact that it helps acquainting them with the true knowledge of Indian history since the advent of the Aryans some three thousand years before the Sultan of Ghazni. The exact object which Romesh Chunder set before himself could not be better stated than in his own words. "No study has so potent an influence in forming a nation's mind as a nation's character as a critical and careful study of its past history. And it

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is by such a study alone that an unnecessary and superstitious worship of the past is replaced by a legitimate and manly admiration."

As already stated, Dutt spent seven years of his life in England after his retirement from Service. And this long period was spent in the role of the spokesman for India and her constitutional and economic problems and no one was best suited for this task than he. Here it should be mentioned that at the close of the year 1897 an important event happened in his life. He was offered a lectureship in Indian history for three years by the Council of the University College London which he thankfully accepted. It was a high honour it gave him honourable and congenial occupation and it also gave him a sort of status and position in England. During the first three years of his stay in that distant land Dutt published two important works, viz *England and India* (1897) and *Famines in India* (1900). The first one is a record of progress during hundred years (1785 - 1885) of British rule in India. In the concluding chapter of this book Dutt gives an outline of his constructive ideas on reforms in the Indian Administration which remained the pivot of his political writings in the future years of his life. We gather from contemporary records that the book received sympathetic hearing in England and it evoked much thinking amongst the English people as to the urgency for a

general inquiry into British rule in India.

In the book *Famines in India* he indicated that the real causes of poverty and wretchedness of Indian cultivator and labourer were more or less due to unwise policy. He also suggested means to improve their condition and making them more resourceful and self-relying. It was his hope that "the present century will not expire without some steps being taken to improve the condition of the people of India." Lord Curzon with whom Dutt crossed sword on many occasions considered the book as "most useful and reasonable." In short this book also roused wide interest among a section of the British public who were sympathetic in the affairs of the Empire.

His biographer informs us that in the course of first three years Dutt was successful in the task of popularising Indian questions in England and rousing the interest of the British public in the aspirations of the Indian people. His grateful countrymen therefore thought it appropriate to elect Romesh Chunder to be the President of the 15th Indian National Congress held at Lucknow in December 1899 as a mark of their sense of appreciation of his devoted labours in the cause of India. He deserved this honour. His presidential address received unanimous praise both for its substance and its tone from critics of all phases of political opinion. It was taken up chiefly with the consideration of economic and agrarian topics relating to the welfare

of the masses, but questions of administrative and fiscal reforms also passed under his comprehensive survey. It may be noted here that the remarkable effect of Dutt's Congress speech, in setting an example in moderation and sobriety was not lost on future Presidents.

The year 1902 saw the publication of Romesh Chunder's monumental work—*The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*—which was a work of years. The book received an appreciative welcome and the *Manchester Guardian* in the course of a lengthy article, said "In several respects this will rank as the most valuable of recent books on British India. The Preface of the book which is somewhat lengthy is highly interesting as well as revealing as the following excerpt from the concluding paragraph will show.

The Indian Empire will be judged by History as the most superb of human institutions in modern times. But it would be a sad story for future historians to tell that the Empire gave the people of India peace but not prosperity; that the manufacturers lost their industries; that the cultivators were ground down by a heavy and variable taxation which precluded any saving; that the revenues of the country were to a large extent diverted to England; and that recurring and desolating famines swept away millions of the population. If India is poor today, it is through the operation of economic causes."

Such an indictment of British rule in India, spe-

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daily by one who had
 spent twenty-five years of
 his life in Service was un-
 thinkable in those days
 and this shows that R-
 mesh Chunder was a man
 cast in a different mould.
 It was not for nothing that
 both Kanade and Nandya
 complimented him as a
 brave patriot whose
 thoughts were welded to
 the welfare of his own
 people. It is in this
 epoch making book that
 we get a thorough insight
 of financial condition
 of the country which is
 painful to read. It is
 a treat to the eye and
 to the ear. Speak
 Dutt's *Financial History of India*
 S. Anandani was the
 translator and it is
 to be said that he has done
 well in his history but not in the
 translation.

[illegible]

open letters fairly launch
ed him into that memor-
ble controversy about
Land Settlements, and the
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his last visit to England in
connection with the works
of the Deccan Mission
(1881-1882) in the
Deccan region which
I visited in 1881-1882
and 1883-1884.

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GUESS WHO?

of course, you know !

Who could it be but your daughter ?

She will need all this love and affection for her to grow into the fine woman that you want her to be. So, for her sake, wait for a while before you think of having the next child

- Doctors say, a gap of three to four years between two children is good for the mother's health also

- Spacing of children is now easy Thanks to science You can now have a

child by choice and not by chance. You have many methods to choose for planning your family

Ask your doctor or the Family Planning Centre to tell you how.



WHEN YOU HAVE TWO
THAT WILL DO



Paradoxes and Double Standards

SACHINDRANATH BASU

As I sit down with pen and paper early this August morning I hear a monotonous clop clop-clop waiting in from the street below. It's a familiar sound, and without looking out of the window I know that a Corporation worker is scraping off the grass from the edges of the foot path and the broad traffic island with his spade. This is an annual chore to strip the grass growing so luxuriantly during the rainy season from over flowing its boundaries.

Your first impulse would be ecstatic admiration for a clerk who pays such attention to details just to keep our city beautiful in trim. But stop a moment and look at the other side of the grassy stretch along the footpath. There vegetation (including small shrubs rising above the grass) has been running wild for years feeding on uncleared rubbish and garbage from the adjoining houses so that at places the cement is hardly visible any more. No doubt if I ask the man with the spade about it he would reply that keeping that part clear is the work of a different department.

Then observe what he is doing with the grass and soil loosened by his spade. He is depositing the mass in little heaps a few inches inside—no doubt for an other non-existent or invisible department to clear

away. These annual contributions have already made the traffic islands and green stretches along the footpaths of this broad avenue (once a show piece of the city) resemble a ploughed field in unevenness.

The right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. Grass is carefully scraped off from the



Keeping that part clear is the work of a different department

cutting edges where it can do no great harm but is allowed unlimited freedom at the inner boundaries so that the footpaths become still unworkable. Now perhaps you would not be so quick to offer kudos to the civic authorities.

In fact the surprising thing is not that the footpaths are not cleared or repaired but that nobody has yet thought of abolishing

the monsoon ritual of cleaning the grass at the edges. Probably, being of such minor importance it is low in the priority list other things from the past such as watering the streets (remember the days) have already been done away with, though chances are that money is still being allocated and the street waterers are still on the payroll.

We are only too familiar with the innumerable lapses of the Corporation many of them more serious than the non-clearing of grass but the example cited has the merits of one hopes or not being repetitive and of showing up clearly its absurdity paradoxical priorities.

Many maid servants emerging from elegant or luxurious buildings deposit household garbage just before the front door as a matter of course. The paradox does not bother the householder a bit and few among the wifarsers care. But listen to this.

Whoever throws dirt in the street shall be punished with a fine of one eighth of a *pana* whoever causes mire or water to collect in the street shall be fined one fourth of a *pana*. This is Krishna (Book 2 Chapter 26) and the progress we have made in the intervening 2000 years is easy to see.

Not that we are a mild, docile lot to be pushed around by all sorts of authorities—the violence

PARADOXES AND DOUBLE STANDARDS

and belligerence all around is only too evident. But even here there is paradox, there is contradiction, daily passengers heat up train drivers and station masters not for the late running of trains alone. Commuters who missed a train that left on time have been known to cheer another train.

Yet we do not think of using the same weapon against our city fathers. The fact is that we have become not mild and docile but apathetic to what all civilized countries take for granted as basic amenities of hygiene. No wonder then that foreigners think of Indians as dirty by habit. An advertisement inserted by the West Bengal Government in Newsweek magazine of May 1, 1967 invited tourists to Calcutta 'with her metropolitan but exotic grandeur'. Compare any possible effect of this piece of propaganda—which must have cost a tidy sum—with the counter-vailing impression made by our roads.

We have prizes and titles for all sorts of things. But if our priorities were right we would be giving them first for the basic improvements—such as workable measures against mosquitoes against pollution and noise in the cities and for the clearing and repair of roads.

Besides grass gathering, holes crowding and so on, a growing cattle population blocks our way on the roads. Shopkeepers have long since perfected the technique of encroaching stealthily beyond their limits, but now pavement space is rapidly being reduced to nil by squatting hawkers who have un-

limited freedom to set up business anywhere they like. Over the years the authorities have taken repeated sporadic action against pavement hawkers and stray cattle, but to no effect. One reads in the papers that court orders are obtained every time by interested parties to frustrate police action. (Natural sympathy for the poor is somewhat diluted when one thinks of who these protectors may be.)

The latest repetition of this farce occurred during the brief period of Governor's rule in West Bengal. One used to hear that Mr Bihari Lal was a courageous man who was not afraid to take action. So when, somewhat to my surprise, his drives against squatting hawkers and khatahs ended in the familiar fiasco even before action was properly taken, I addressed the following questions to him since he was also known as a Governor who paid due regard to what ordinary citizens had to say.

1 Why does not the Government profit from experience and shun these fruitless drives?

2 I have seen notices in newspapers involving expenditure of public money, telling the citizens why and how the Government proposes to remove cattle from the city area could not at least such expenditure be avoided if these fruitless projects were not undertaken."

3 By making promises that are so easily nullified does not the Government lose the respect of the people?"

4 Footpaths are made for walking is the right of a few people, such as goals and hawkers, to ply

their trade greater than the right of millions of citizens to walk unhindered on the footpaths?

5. If the present law favours those who obstruct the roads, cannot something be done to change the law?

I received no reply, and friends later told me that the letter had never reached the Governor. So the paradox in item 4 above remained unresolved. According to the newspapers, the U F Minister for Roads & Roads Development has declared that roadside stallholders will not be interfered with. Presumably this also goes for goats. And that's that.

Consider two more examples, one concerning discipline and the other democracy, before we leave West Bengal. The policemen's raid in the Assembly House justly resulted in prompt and severe punishment. Yet when factory workers beat up managers and destroy property, our Ministers look the other way, and not a word is heard about discipline as if everything depends on who is at the receiving end. Perhaps this is in keeping with their often reiterated policy of not interfering with democratic movements. But when hospital workers strike constituent parties of the U.F. go to fight them with bombs. Again Ministers are so busy defending party henchmen that they have no time to spare a word of sympathy for the innocent nurses and patients who are injured, though leftist leaders never tire of invoking compassion for the common man as the basis of their political faith. When the sound of words

'their their meetings,' this is the result. The Health Minister is reported to have declared that this particular strike was 'un-democratic'. When it is left to you to define entities like democracy and lawlessness you can have it both ways.

Now we leave the narrow confines of our State and proceed to Delhi, the citadel of democracy and justice to get away from double standards and regain some balance and sanity. But we quickly shed our blinkers and find ideal and practice no less topsy-turvy.

A senior leader who has been the Finance Minister off and on and preached austerity all the time is dismissed out of office and becomes the chairman of the Administrative Reforms Committee. The old body even before turning word demands

deputy secretaries, clerks and a fleet of cars. And official houses vacated in August 1965 showed that the leader once again in the Government spent the highest amount among Ministers on his personal staff (more than Rs 2 lakhs in one year).

India is a member of the UN but contrary to the latter's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 13 para 2) our Government has banned foreign travel in the name of conserving foreign exchange. So unless you belong to a few limited categories or know how to fix things (in which all people are becoming rapidly proficient), you stay out. But of course the ban does not touch its own

officials. According to official information given in Parliament, such visits worked out at 7½ per day between January 1 and August 15 1965. Since then it need hardly be pointed out the flood has only gained in volume. But these are the New Brahmins of modern India.

The purpose is always 'important affairs of state'. And somehow the frequency of these affairs



purpose is always
of affairs of state

shows a quick rise during winter and summer (high for Piths in April) and then is a rapid decline in the cold weather. I know a Government official (not of the top VIP class) who was so pleased with his personal assistant that he sent him abroad for three months. The poor fellow didn't enjoy it very much and was somewhat of a loss to know what it was all about.

A President announces on taking up office that he would hold darbar for the common people at Rashtrapati Bhavan on certain days. In the week a Minister vows at the time of the Chinese attack that

in his home state until Indian soil is cleared of the last invading soldier. A lot of ballyhoo is drummed up but it would take intense historical research to find out how and when these laudable resolves were quietly dropped.

American journalists invented the term 'credibility gap' towards the end of Mr Johnson's term as President. But as such instances show our leaders beat the USA long ago. For a more recent example, consider the Prime Minister's famous statement that 95% of the people are behind her in bank nationalization, presumably the people include the peasants and artisans, the poor millions in the countryside who know nothing about banking and have probably never heard of banks.

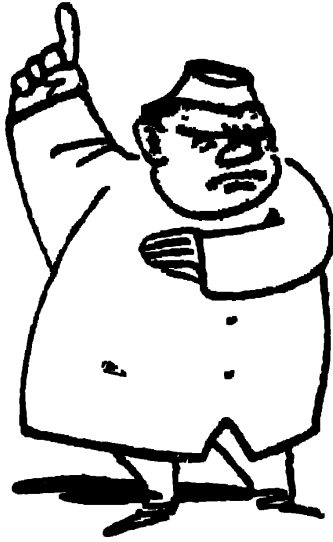
Then take the statement that the State Bank is no less efficient than any other bank or that Government enterprises are functioning properly. Only those who have no experience of cashing cheques at the State Bank or paying LIC premia can be so supremely categorical. One is also reminded of Mr Nehru's statement that corruption among Government servants in India was no greater than in any other country.

Lately there has been much talk of party discipline. Congress party members are hauled over the coals for writing articles criticizing certain actions of the Prime Minister but when she openly advocates free vote among members for the Presidential election, apparent-

PARADOXES AND DOUBLE STANDARDS

In the question of discipline is irrelevant.

Double standards, paradoxes, contradictions in the country as a whole in a state in a city at whatever level within whatever circle you look—to the left or to the right—you find nothing but these. Examples can be multiplied indefinitely and those cited are only selected ones from the recent past. It is true that the common man is faced with the same brush in some observations at the beginning of this article and indeed the everyday experiences of all of us show. But questions of morality and consistency are much more serious in those who claim to lead and constantly heap on principles because the consequence is likely to be graver.



at the time of the C.P. attack

It is also true that double standards are to be found in other countries even in the West. But here it is becoming rapidly impossible to find an exception to Oscar Wilde's

definition of the politician as one who can sit on a fence and keep both ears on the ground.

India may be edging towards material prosperity, but a nation does not live—perhaps not even survive—by bread alone. Those who care for other values such as honesty, sincerity and true compassion see them trampled in the mad rush for power, privilege or hard cash in the name of high principles. They seek shelter from the raucous din of passion and hatred that more and more tends to drown and they wonder can anything ultimately good emerge from such ordidness? Must man in modern society shed all human qualities to become a creature of politics so odious a nature?



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A Tale of Two Cities

SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

THE cry de coeur of elderly or middle-aged Bengalis is that Calcutta is not what she has been. To-day, most visitors not necessarily prejudiced—Vehru, Nairpaul, Karan Singh—agree that for birth, tench and tension the city will take some beating. But this winter can vouch that Calcutta was a very pleasant city in the Thirties with far more amenities, bonhomie and culture than New Delhi or Bombay. We always regarded Delhi as the city of clerks and Bombay as the city of Anglo-Indians.

Stretching memory even further, this writer recalls that Calcutta was, however, a smaller city in the mid-twenties. Trams and buses went only up to Kalighat. Raj Behary Avenue did not exist, not to mention the Route 24 of the thirties. Tollymore was a small village where jacks plowed after dark. I have a feeling that might come a little quicker those days. Perhaps the fact that it was a gas-lit city created the illusion. We never ventured very much to the south of Kalighat, though one of my more intrepid friends boasted he had gone to Russa (the present Kudghat) all the way on foot. We bestowed an admiration on him worthy of an Antarctic explorer or an astronaut.

On the one occasion I went to the far south I was benighted and felt dis-

fructify unceasingly. I clearly remember walking alone by torchlight—there was no street light in Tokyo—down the long, dark, and filthy alleyways of the numerous *machis*. The fire-bells have haunted my memory, and I would have good reason to fear them even in Columbia. But the fire-bells have gone, the *machis* are clean.

We

We **halt**
[m] [n]

and the

ment. I don't estimate my
tentative "bush" there
as a very high one. I
don't know the conditions
that are after that. We
had heard some and then
couldn't find a good
one. I don't know how
many and how many
of them are in the
state of the world.

Chatter had many lights in those days—street lanterns at Ramey, Pol, Stone Pond or Sunny Park produced the illusion of being in an English country side. I did a troll along Wood Street, the old Ballymore Mount, where the cricket match between Ballymore and County was an annual event. I looked mysterious and beautiful by moonlight and we were ready to believe that fairies danced upon the green when none was looking. Tagore had lived in one of the houses on Stone Road

is known by a different name which overlooks the fact that the Maiden

The audit find syn-
er-
mut feel particularly sore
when he told the trans-
port of the city. The
ladun and brought him
remuneration of nineteenth
century. Country had
been become rare but there
were no number of the
chance and phantoms. A
phantom drive along the
Park Road or by the Gates
was not the monopoly of
a lover alone. One
of the sun and stones
centered toward a phantom

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send you the first to in-
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related information. Just
return the coupon to
the publisher.

the common
of the house. It was
a kind of room to do on
the top of a rough double-
deck and half a foot that
world of working me out
for Sunday and public
holidays. The train pro-
vided all day of his trips for
the day.

In that pre-1949 copper
calender the statu symbol
of the nation it was a gar-
den not in an-conditioner.
The nation had always
been found in the statu-
tion, a broken and mouldy
and overcast with bud-
dismorphism. The fountains
are dry. The flowers are
all gone gone long ago
some thing symbolic of a
leisurely and sweeter Cal-

Calcutta went with them. The flowers in the Parks and boulevards are sorry substitutes.

It is a great pity that Calcutta has rung no bells for the Bengali writers. Tagore is a conspicuous offender. The only two major writers who communicate something of the *genius loci* of Calcutta are Prayit Kumar Mukherjee and Bibhut Bhushan Banerjee. But Prayit Mukherjee is a greatly neglected writer and Bibhut Banerjee, like W. H. Hudson, was happier in the company of trees than in that of people.

This vanished Calcutta survives only in the piece of Rumour Golden. But those common evenings of old Calcutta come back to me. There were many more boats on the river and shanties could be heard late at night. Weismann at the temples was no more ritual and the temple bells contributed to the muted music of the city. There were the humming street cries chiefly of the *charwallahs*, the basket sellers and the flower sellers. Hearing the cuckoo for the first time in the season was an experience much looked forward to. The cuckoo may be smothered to-day but its song is drowned in the trams and the processions. Or maybe the cuckoo is too quiet; despair has tired of Calcutta and left for more welcome haunts. I do not know.

All the same, the lemon-coloured, perfume-scented evenings come back with all their tender grace and an accompanying ache. I recall the afternoon lights growing rich and deep in the collage garden where the grass turned to emerald and the trees seemed to dip down in

green then colour from the grass. The canna lilies shone pink and scarlet in parrot colours. The flowers from the baubinia tree had fallen romantically on the grass and the jasmine was in bud. When night came the palm trees like ships sailed in the wind. The colours were lost and only the cents were left. Those cents come back to me though the bloom has gone irrevocably.

Then is now Chinese cooking was our ultimate in exotic cuisine but Calcutta has never had a Chinese restaurant to match the now vanished Canton Restaurant in Park Street Lane or the now vanished Shunghin in Lee School Lane.

Or Chow Men and the prospect of bird-nest soup. The hushed voices of the waiters, the dim lights (dim lights had not become a part of show-off yet) created a Maurice Dekobra or a Sax Polmer atmosphere. Years afterwards when I read Maugham's Chinese stories I felt a sudden nostalgia for those restaurants. But to tell the truth I do not remember the smell of opium smoking. Maybe, I was not looking for it.

*

Where is that city gone? Today's Calcutta everybody's Aunt Sally is in Alien City. Of no other city is this so all true. One may do anything in or about Calcutta and always get away with it. One may build skyscrapers which remain vacant and unoccupied while Bengalis are huddled into hovels and one sleep on the streets or may excrete on pavements in broad daylight and no questions asked. And finally one may broadcast lies and libels about

Calcutta, without a single protest either from the people or from the Government. Even the Babylon of the *Revelations* enjoyed better repute.

The latest in the list of Calcutta's traducers is Kenneth Tynan's play *Oh Calcutta* now being shown all round the world.

The present plight of Calcutta is at least partly due to a demoralisation and degradation of the Bengalees which again is one of the consequences of the Partition of India. This demoralisation is easily visible in two ways—first in naked Racketism and secondly in utter apathy. It is not generally known that house-rents and land in Calcutta are the highest in the world not including New York and Washington. This artificial situation has been brought about by the Improvement Trust and the machinations of capitalists and tycoons from Western India.

It is common to see in Calcutta newspaper advertisements like the following: Western style three-roomed flat, south of Park Street. Rent a mere six hundred. Company lease preferred and Bengalees unwanted. The advertiser is often a non-Bengali but not always. Only very deprived persons can publicly exclude their own people. Such an advertisement would not have been tolerated in any other State capital—say Hyderabad, Chhatthi or Bhubaneswar—but in Calcutta it is taken for granted.

Partition has induced a sense of frustration in the Bengali. And with the frustration has come a persecution complex. The pity is that the persecution complex is not matched by a

A TALE OF TWO CITIES*

will to cope with the real persecution—for there is persecution and a great deal of it. But in the Towns language, the response is unequal to the challenge.

The Bengali is being squeezed not only out of influence and employment but also out of his dwelling-place. For the first two he has to thank a former Chief Minister who refused to put any kind of pressure (or even persuasion) on private employers to concede priorities and preference to the sons of the soil. Such priorities are taken for granted in every other State in India.

Anyone strolling to the west or south of Kalighat tram depot will have to rub his eyes to persuade himself that he is indeed living in a Bengali city. There is little evidence of this. The grocer, the provision store, and even stationers have South Indian signs. In Mysore Road and Lake Road every third house is a South Indian Boarding House. There is a mixed and pervasive smell of *adhs* and *Dasas* pickles, *asafetida* and coffee. The conversation is *labherwocky*—from Vijayawada to Madurai; there is no telling which—and quite unintelligible to Bengali ears.

The whole of South Calcutta—i.e. sophisticated and modern Calcutta—is an Alien city to-day and that aggressively. In the Flgin Road area it is hard to believe that it is not a chunk of Surat or Ahmedabad. Only Gujarati voices are heard and only Gujaratis are in evidence. Every piece of land is being bought at exorbitant prices, skyscrapers built up and all but Gujaratis excluded. This could not have been done

or tolerated, even in Bombay, not to mention Gauhati. The same process is at work in the Wood Street-Camac Street-Theatre Road area, though here the *herrenvolk* are the men from Rajasthan. The Bengali lacks either the will or the means—maybe, both—of resisting this.

What Ronald Segal describes as the chronic apathy of the Indian is most acutely illustrated by the Bengali. A century ago Macaulay described the Bengali as a stoic. As we know the Stoic is indifferent to suffering. The Bengali of to-day is a stoic about other persons' sufferings. Calcutta is a city where one should always carry an identity card. It is a city where every man is an island. Its chronic sense of trauma derives partly from fact and partly from a feeling that the march of history has been along other routes and has taken a detour round it. Cities and Thrones and Powers said Kipling have only a brief existence in Time's eye. Nonetheless, no city likes being a leaf in the winds of history.

The tragedy of Calcutta is that its citizens have no sense of belonging. The right to belong, to have grass roots is the most cherished and sacred of human rights. The real citizens of Calcutta feel that they are unwanted in their own city and the exploiting aliens from other parts of India have the grass roots elsewhere. Calcutta is their collection-counter, not their city. Whose city then is Calcutta? No one's obviously. We are all tent-dwellers in an Alien City. But the tabernacle is not a home.

It is only since Partition or Independence that Calcutta has become a sick and decaying city. It is suffering from a death-wish. The death-wish is alike reflected in the vacant faces of the commuters, the listless purposeless faces of Sun-baked or rain-drenched cinema-queuers and in the sudden tantrums of the bomb-happy teddy-boys. It is a sure sign of a diseased and dying city with a large number of pavement-sleepers that its modern luxury flats are fitted with gas, galani and geysers and charge rents about five hundred times the per capita income of India.

The poet says: Dear City of Cecrops, And wilt thou not say, dear city of Zeus? Marcus Aurelius asked the question a long time ago. Calcutta is no one's dear city and particularly not of the real citizens. They are unmoved while the Angel of Death flaps its wings and the death-rattle of the city is audible. The scandalous garbage heaps lying unmoved, lum-dwellers excreting on the pavements, the filthy *Ligubibi's* Bazar which should have been razed to the ground many years ago, the plight of the tenants and the pavement-sleepers, the daily humiliation to which Bengali girls are subjected by men from other parts of India—these things do not cause the smallest concern in Calcutta. Nor does the growing *Rachmanism* and the growing *sadism*. Indignation is human apathy is not. Calcutta is not only an alien, but a traumatic city. And now it suffers from more than a sense of alienation. It has lost the will to live.



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Artistic Woodcrafts

ASHISH BASU

FROM a very early time mankind has depended on wood.

Next to earth wood is the most common material we use for our daily needs. Man has always used wood throughout history, as a potent source of comfort-heat shelter, hunting tools, benches and beds and for transportation.

The earliest construction of houses, temples, palaces and even city boulevards in India were entirely made in wood and stone. Among the wooden structures, the Mauryan palace at Pataliputra (third century B.C.) is a memorable specimen, on which the Greek visitor Megasthenes writes "Neither Monomidian Susa in all its glory nor Peshawar with all its magnificence can hope to vie with this place."

Wood has a rich contribution towards the progress of civilisation — the first wheel the first means of water transport, the first fire the first place to shut off cold were all made of wood.

Next to earth and stone, Indian craftsmen throughout the ages have always depended on wood for display of their artistic skill. Wood is subtle soft in texture and smooth to work on. Wood is possibly the best medium for expressionistic work. It can easily be carved, chiselled and turned on lathe.

Wood-carving as a decorative art had developed in India perhaps before any other country. The wooden doors of the old

houses the wooden chaityas of Indian temples, the finely carved ceilings of the Jain Temples are splendid examples of our wood carver's art. The gateways and railings of early Buddhist stupas appeared to have been copied from wooden prototypes.

Wood being a perishable

item, early pieces of wood work are not found in excavations but wood work must have flourished here in close association with sculpture and architecture. Though initially the accent was mainly on the decoration of temples the ornamentation of wood in India attained a high



Image of Durga

level of artistic excellence in the mediaeval period. Its wider application to items of furniture, cabinet work and other articles was influenced by the early European traders. The vast antiquity apart, George Wood has aptly remarked that there is perhaps no feature of Indian art that manifests so great a diversity and so many points of interest as that of wood work.

The forests in India have a wide range of woods. Teak, Sal, Mahogany, Seacum, Deodar, Walnut, Pin, Sandalwood, Camair, Redwood, Rose wood, Ebony, Neem, Red Cedar and many other varieties are available in India in plenty. The art conception in wood work depends much on the grains of the wood. While Teak, Red wood and Walnut yield themselves to deep under-cutting and sculpture, Seacum and Deodar respond best to low relief, Ebony to incise design and Sandalwood for carving intricate and minute details because of its smoothness and close structure of grains.

Indian woodwork manifests great variety and regional diversity. Coming of common ancestors like the traditional potters or the weavers of India, the Indian wood-carvers now live scattered in different parts of India — they are known as 'Acharis' in the south, 'Sutradhars' in the east, 'Sudhars' in the west and 'Badhats' in the north. In fact the regional varieties developed with the influence of regional social and other characteristics, ritual observances and customs. Thus we see that today in Andhra colourful lacquered toys of light wood are made in Konda-

palhi while Tirupathi makes religious figures carved out of red Sandalwood and the village Nimal makes not only toys but other articles also richly coloured and ornamental. In Bengal and Bihar the



Mother and Child

outlines of wooden toys are hewn out the rest is done by painting. Banaras now makes mostly animals, also painted but fully covered. In Rajasthan, Madhavpradesh and Mysore the wood work is lacquered and from Mysore comes the bulk of Sandalwood carvings.

Ornamentation of wood is done in various ways such as by painting, lacquering, inlaying, carving, turning etc. While Tarkashi work of Manipuri is renowned for

inlaying the fine wood-carvings of Mysore, Honawar, Kumbha, Bangalore are also known throughout India.

The groups of produce in wood can be divided into few broad groups—dolls and toys, images and plaques, figures of animals and birds, miscellaneous items like masks, artistic furniture etc., containers for various uses and a host of other utility and decorative articles.

The wood carvers of India, it was estimated during 1961 Census produced woodwares worth rupees 264 crores. According to the same report there were 27,874 persons engaged in the industry.

The wood work is done in Indian villages and towns from very early times. Certain specialised centres spread throughout country developed. Today the specialised centres of art-woodwork are Simaga, Jaipur, Mysore, Hoshiarpur, Sukheda, Junagarh, Pothapur, Idar, Kondapalli, Hyderabad, Kintal, Ettikoppaka, Sagai, Sorab, Bangalore, Honawar, Channanpetna, Saharanpur, Banaras, Madurai, Tiruchir, Tiruvendrum, Ranchi, Patna, Manipuri, Nagina, Kanauj, Surat and a few other places.

In West Bengal the wood-carvers live at Dainhat and Natungram in the district of Burdwan and the wood turners live at Susunia in the district of Bankura.

Indian wood-carvings display great artistic talent and high standard of technical ability. Such wide range of artistic expression on wood — icons, images and specimens of mythological and human figures are not found anywhere in the world.

In the early medieval age

Aspirations of The Bengalis for Political Independence

Dr ATUL CHANDRA ROY

IT was from Bengal that the first flames of the great national upsurge of 1857-58 started and the aspirations of the people of this sub-continent for national independence grew in volume through the succeeding decades till the achievement of the same in 1947. Till the *drang nach Osten* Drive to the East slogan of the Nazis of Germany in the Second World War the Indian people also directed their whole attention towards Delhi the capital of British empire in India for about a century since the great upsurge of 1857-58. But the traditions of Bengal political aspirations took their origin long ago since the beginning of the medieval period of Indian history.

It is interesting to note that throughout the medieval age and the beginning of the modern age Bengal possessed certain peculiar features physically, politically and culturally that gave her a distinct position at least in Northern India. These peculiarities doubtless, made the Bengalis feel themselves as a distinct race and made them conscious of distinct existence in the body-politic of India. Long distance from Delhi, the centre of imperial power and difficulties

of communications in those days made the feeling of distinct existence stronger in the mind of the people of this province. Even in the heydays of the Mughals Prince Shah Jahan who rose up in arms against his Imperial father decided to create for himself a new centre of influence and authority in Bengal. Bengali writer S. S. Bhattacharya 'on account of its physical features, geographical isolation, rich natural resources coupled with its chronic political confusion had afforded a tempting field to many a daring adventurer and an asylum to many a political refugee' (*Chitra II of Bengal II* p. 200).

The traditions of Bengal's aspirations for political independence owed their origin to the establishment of a Muslim principality in Bengal by Muhammad Bakhtyar Khalji in 1202 A.D. Bakhtyar Khalji who was not considered worthy of employment by Qutbuddin Aibak of Delhi because he was without the means of providing himself with a horse and a suit of armour had been wandering as a penniless adventurer. However shortly he raised an army of his own and ultimately occupied Nadia and

Gaur in Bengal after driving out Raja Lakshman Sen into Eastern Bengal. Muhammad Bakhtyar was made the marker of the medieval history of Bengal.

This chief monument of glory was the Muslim principality of Lakhnauti with conditions of independent origin which not only survived his death but went on expanding into a glorious Sultanate of Gaur (*ibid* p. 14). As a matter of fact Muhammad Bakhtyar's political exploits in Bengal were his own achievements without any help from either Muhammad Ghori or his lieutenant in India Qutbuddin Aibak. Hence the political power that Bakhtyar built up in Bengal was for all practical purposes, independent origin.

This tradition of the independent origin of the Muslim political ascendancy in Bengal influenced the future relations between this province and the Lords of Delhi as well as it gave rise to certain political movements. These maxims as enunciated by the Muslim rulers, nobles and the people of Bengal created a peculiar situation in the province whose parallel we do not come across in any other part of the Sultanate of Delhi. The possession of Gaur-Lakh-

ASPIRATIONS OF THE BENGALIS FOR POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

nanti entitled its ruler to the coveted status of Malik-us-Sharq or Lord of the East. It meant in practice defying of Delhi's sovereignty over Bengal.

It is true that Bakhtyar Khalji did not assume regal title, but certainly he had the *khutba* read and coins struck in his own name (*Tabaqat-i-Ikhwan*, P. 51). This striking of coins and reading of *khutba* in the name of Bakhtyar is a sufficient evidence of a distinct political status for the first Muslim ruler of Bengal and the kingdom that he founded.

The Sultan of Delhi Quthuddin could do nothing to assert Delhi's suzerainty over Bengal till the Khaljis themselves became involved in some sort of a civil war in Bengal for the throne. The Sultan of Delhi first intervened by ordering the governor of Oudh Rumi to settle the affairs of the Khaljis in Bengal. This time a lieutenant of Bakhtyar Muhammad Shiran Khalji was on the throne of Bengal who continued the same tradition of his own independence—enjoyment of sovereignty without any regal title. As a matter of fact Ali Mardan Khalji the assassin of Bakhtyar betrayed the interests of the Khalji principality of Bengal by proceeding to Delhi and provoking Quthuddin to send an army to assert Delhi's suzerainty over Bengal. As soon as Rumi crossed the river Kosi Iwaz Khalji a premier noble of Gaur-Lakhnauti betrayed the cause of the Khaljis and joined the imperial army. As a reward for his defection Iwaz Khalji was appointed the fit-holder of Devkot and henceforth the Khalji principality was to

be governed by a protégé of the Delhi Sultan. Thus for the first time Delhi's hold over Bengal was established at least theoretically. Shiran Khalji preferred to die as a sovereign rather than submitting to vassalage of Delhi.

The treachery of Iwaz Khalji caused much resentment among the Khaljis and this encouraged the Sultan of Delhi Quthuddin to strengthen Delhi's hold over the province. With this object in view he appointed the run-away Khalji noble Ali Mardan the Viceroy of Bengal and dismissed him from his court with present and honour (1210 A.D.). Without opposing Ali Mardan Iwaz Khalji retired to the background. However, his time for a more favourable turn of affairs. Ali Mardan was the first ruler of Gaur-Lakhnauti who had assumed formal independence under the title of Sultan. Alauddin Minhaj-i-Siraj writes that the death of Quthuddin Aibak in 1210 A.D. threw the Sultanate of Delhi into a melting pot and "the territory of Lakhnauti was appropriated by the Khalji Maliks and Sultans."

Soon Ali Mardan's greed and cruelties provoked the Khalji Amirs and Maliks who rose up in arms against him and they were helped by the weak and the indigent (people) to dethrone him" (*Ramerty*, P. 559). The rebels murdered Ali Mardan and crowned Husamuddin Iwaz Khalji for the second time (1212-1227 A.D.) who assumed the title of Sultan. Anticipating Delhi's aggression for his assumption of regal title, Iwaz strengthened and sanctified his status by procuring an investiture from the Khalifa of Baghdad. In fact, Iwaz Khalji was the first Muslim king of India to secure a formal recognition to his regal position from the highest Pontiff of Islam. To the credit of Iwaz, it must be admitted that he raised the Muslim principality of Lakhnauti to the status of an independent kingdom, for all practical purposes.

Again it was he who realised the importance of defending the capital city, garrisoning troops and building up a naval power with a view to facing Delhi's challenge from a position of strength. The traditions of Bengalis' independence thus got a firm footing. According to Batauni it was the habit and practice of the people of Lakhnauti to raise their heads in rebellion against the Lords of Delhi and hence Lakhnauti henceforth came to be known as 'Pailehakupur' or city of rebellion to the Sultans of Delhi.

Delhi's imperial authorities however never gave up their attempts to reduce this rebel province to subjection. The Sultans like, Iltutmish, Balban, Ghiasuddin Tughluq, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firuz Tughluq made repeated attempts in that direction. Iwaz Khalji was overthrown by Iltutmish by a surprise attack upon the capital city in 1227 A.D. when Iwaz was in Eastern Bengal leaving his capital denuded of troops. Bengal was thus for the first time brought under effective rule of Delhi by the appointment of Prince Nasiruddin as its governor. Delhi's authorities adopted since then the policy of appointing their own trust-

ASPIRATIONS OF THE BENGALIS FOR POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

ted Mamluk slaves to the post of governor of the province with a view to keeping the province under permanent subjugation. But unfortunately they were frustrated. Whoever was put on the 'takhtah' of Bengal soon revolted against Delhi under favourable circumstances.

Of the Mamluk slave-governors of Bengal Tughial was very powerful (1268-1291 A.D.). His rebellion against the overlordship of Delhi shook the very foundation of the Sultanate of Delhi during the reign of Balban. Balban was the first Sultan of Delhi who devised a new policy to keep Bengal under permanent subjection by appointing his trusted slave Tughial as the deputy governor of Bengal. According to the *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* this was the only instance of the appointment of a deputy governor to be used to put a check on the ambition of the governor of Bengal. A class always prone to rebellion.

But Delhi's policy of checks and balances did not work at all. Tughial soon drove out the governor of the province, assumed the title of Sultan and issued coins in his own name. Tughial's court at Lakhnauti rivalled that of Delhi in power and magnificence and he was more popular with his Hindu and Muslim subjects and better served by them than Sultan Balban. About Tughial Barani writes: "He was profuse in his liberality, so the people of the city (of Delhi) who had been there and also the inhabitants of that place (Lakhnauti) became very friendly to him." As a

matter of fact Tughial's people followed his fortune through thick and thin and never voluntarily betrayed him. "In short, Balban was now at war not with an individual rebel but with a whole province and this accounts for the repeated failures of the imperial armies against Bengal and the Sultan's own difficulties in subduing Tughial" (*History of Bengal II* P. 61).

Such was the dimension of the rebellion that Barani writes: "Balban lost his sleep and appetite when the news of Tughial's assumption of sovereignty in Bengal reached him. The determination of Balban to crush the rebellion of Bengal is evident from the statement of Barani who writes: 'The Sultan many times declared in public to his troops: I have put half the empire of Delhi at stake for the pursuit of Tughial if he would sit down on the seat I will pursue him and so long as I do not pour forth his blood and that of his associates I shall not return towards Delhi or even utter the name of Delhi.' It was only after repeated failures and great exertions that Balban succeeded in suppressing the rebellion. While leaving Bengal Balban advised his son Bughra Khan who was appointed governor of the province to follow certain rules of conduct because Bengal was far off from Delhi and being a turbulent province it required wise and generous administration."

Doubtless throughout the early medieval period Bengal was a nightmare to the rulers of Delhi. With a view to curbing the spirit of rebellion and the belligerent attitude of the peo-

ple of Bengal towards Delhi, Muhammad bin Tughluq partitioned Bengal into three territorial units, each under a governor. Lord Curzon did almost the same thing in the early 20th Century to check the nationalism of the Bengalis. For some time the Tughluq Sultan's plan worked well in keeping the Bengalis divided regionally. But soon Iltas Shah the founder of the noted Iltas Shahi dynasty, restored Bengal's independence territorial unity of the province and dethroned Delhi's authority. Sultan Firuz Shah of Delhi led two expeditions personally against Bengal, once in 1353 when Iltas Shah frustrated the attempt of Delhi and again in 1358 when Sikander Shah of Bengal once more saved Bengal's independence by taking shelter in the fortress of Fiddala.

Significantly enough, Sultan Firuz Shah gave the name of Azadpur to the fortress of Fiddala (*The Lullaby of Firuz Shah*). It is to be noted that Firuz Shah's invasions were resisted tooth and nail not only by Muslim subjects but also by the Hindu subjects and Hindu generals as well. As a matter of fact Firuz Shah was deeply impressed by the spirit of independence of the people of the province and he virtually acknowledged it although he consoled himself for his failure by observing that the ruler of Bengal (Iltas Shah) was a 'bhangi' and a leper.

Bengal's existence as an independent state continued under the next illustrious dynasty of Husain Shah. After the battle of Panipat in 1526, Mughal

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emperor Bahadur made an attempt to conquer Bengal. But the anti-Mughal front organised by the Sultan of Bengal Nasir Shah frustrated Bahadur's plan and the province continued to enjoy peace and prosperity under that illustrious dynasty.

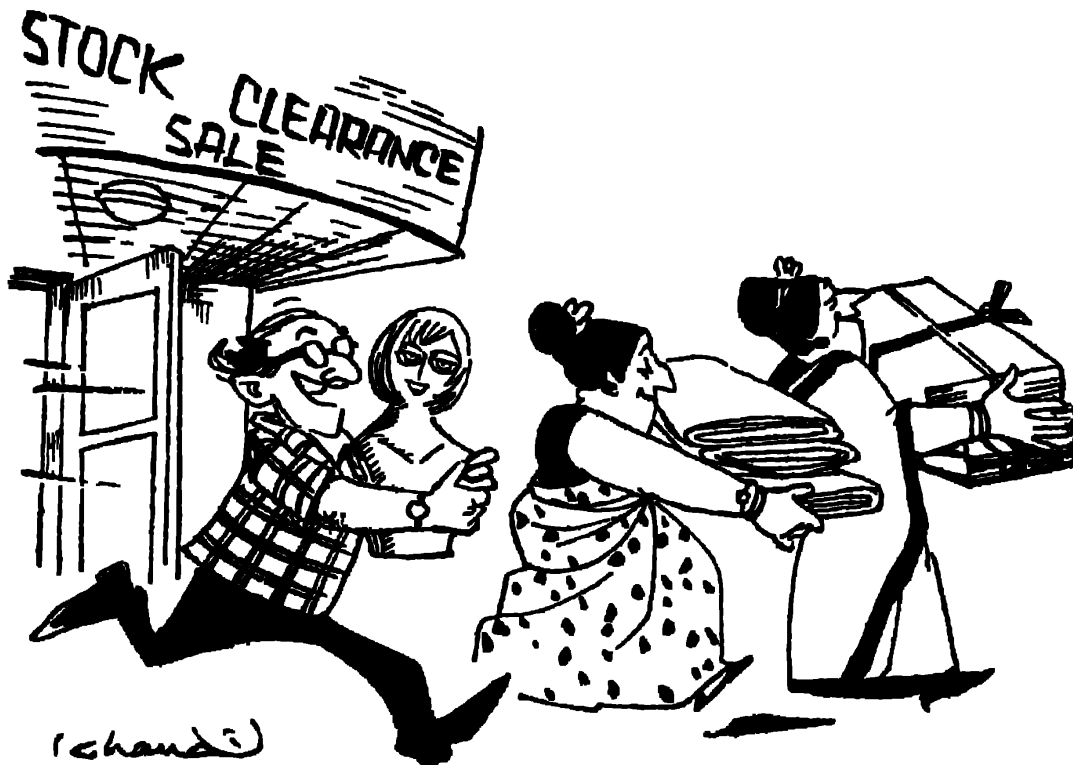
Dellah Shah, the Sultan of Bengal, Nasir Shah, has created two principal centres for the future of Bengal to educate Bengali people. The first is the school of Bengali literature and undaunted fighting men and the second is the school of Bengali literature and undaunted fighting men.

mostly Hindus who acted as the landed militia made the task of conquering Bengal extremely difficult for an outsider. To this must be added the national consciousness of the Bengalis due to the growth of their culture and civilisation shared by the Hindus and Muslims alike. This consciousness, though the gain of future generations, has been the cause of the Bengali's undaunted fighting men and the school of Bengali literature and undaunted fighting men.

rulers, the exuberance of life continued unabated for the next hundred and fifty years. 'With this renaissance the rulers of the house of Husain Shah are inseparably connected.'

The spirit of independence kindled by the people of the province and strengthened further by the growth of nationalism in the medieval age, died down and it was in the greater proportion of the Bengali tradition. The tradition of independence through the growth of the Bengali nation, the growth of the Bengali nation, the growth of the Bengali nation.

Shopping Spree



He is the best who can do last

Are We Alone in This Universe?

, D. C. ROY

THIS topical question means to know whether life is existing in any other heavenly body or bodies besides the earth. This question did not arise in ancient days when people used to believe in mythology according to which there were several lokas such as Maitaloka where mortal creatures live that is, this earth, Devloka the abode of immortal gods ruled by the King Indra Gandharvaloka (Chandraloka etc. But days of belief in mythology are now over. People are now rational and scientific-minded.

This question has now arisen mostly due to the following reasons: (1) Flying saucers have been reported and still are reported from time to time to have been seen by people from various parts of the earth. If there be some truth, the mystery has to be solved. (2) Quick success in conquering space resulting in landing by astronauts on the surface of the moon on the 21st July, this year, has encouraged scientists to know more of the outer world. (3) The mystery how life has been first created on the earth has now been solved by scientists and it is expected that life may be created in the laboratory before the end of this century from ordinary chemical elements, (4) The recep-

tion of radio signals from the depth and remote corners of the universe has created enthusiasm to scientists to know details of the universe.

Let us scrutinize the question by scientific reasons. The material constituents of any living body are perfectly ordinary chemical atoms — carbon such as we find in soot or lampblack, hydrogen and oxygen, such as we find in water, nitrogen such as forms the greater part of the atmosphere and so on. Every kind of atom necessary for life must have existed on the new-born earth 3 to 5 billion years ago. Gamow has nicely said that when this gigantic and expanding universe was created after a tremendously big bang nature took less than an hour to make the atoms of all chemical elements a few hundred million years to make the stars and planets, but about three billion years to make man.

While living matter consists of quite ordinary atoms it consists in the nature of atoms which have a special capacity for coagulating into extraordinary large bunches or molecules.

Most atoms do not possess this property. The atoms of hydrogen and oxygen, for instance may combine to form molecules of hydrogen (H_2 or H_2) of oxygen or ozone (O_2 or O_3),

of water (H_2O), or of hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2), but none of these compounds contains more than four atoms. The addition of nitrogen does not greatly change the situation. But the further addition of carbon completely transforms the picture. The atoms of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon combine to form molecules containing hundreds, thousands, and even ten of thousands of atoms. It is of such molecules that living bodies are mainly formed. Oparin says that simple chemical processes occurred spontaneously on the primitive earth and converted simple inanimate compounds to complex living chemical structures.

Whatever was necessary somehow happened billions of years ago, when the transition from inorganic, simple compounds to molecular structures which could serve as building blocks for the complex molecules of living organisms took place on a prebiological earth.

The geologists tell us that by this time the atmosphere, oceans and the solid mantle of earth were able to supply the simple chemicals from which complex molecular structure could be formed. At this point the elements had already given rise to simple compounds such as methane, carbon dioxide, ammonia, and water. Energy

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te adequate, not excessive nor less, in the form of heat and solar radiation was available to produce simple biological molecules like amino-acids to activate the chemi-polymerisation of those simple molecules into more complex biological molecules.

According to the present view, to start with, there are six principal chemical elements of living matter: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur, and phosphorus. The elements composed the simple molecular compounds which themselves used as building blocks for larger, more complex molecules, some of which are composed of many amino-acids and inorganic salts, serve as a good example of this. These amino-acids were themselves built up from simple compounds of the elements: carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, and sulphur.

Thus, in living matter, the building process, genetic molecules DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) and RNA (ribonucleic acid) which are the bases of life were made from the nucleoside bases.

In trying to decide how life might have happened simultaneously billions of years ago the first step was to unravel the mystery of how amino-acid building blocks got there in the first place. One answer was provided when it is found that four of the twenty amino-acids could be obtained by repeatedly passing an electrical discharge through an artificial atmosphere of methane, water, ammonia and hydrogen. Later results may be obtained by heating the mixture without hydrogen.

Another interesting fact has been discovered that when silica, say sand from a sea beach, is present in the mixture being heated most of the amino-acids found in protein, the most essential constituent of life are produced. 'Thurloekless' sand might itself have been a very important factor in the first chemical step in the threshold of life.

Scientists have found out that similarly all steps could take place spontaneously on the pre-biological earth building larger molecules and assembling them into complex polymers and finally producing the living matter. In fact scientists have now been able to perform in the laboratory most of these processes. Their view is also that the genetic determinants of the first complex molecules might have been in the molecular mixture of the simple compounds available.

Thus we see that creation of life requires the chemical elements mentioned above, and suitable physical conditions for its appearance. The most important of which is the temperature at which the initial actions take place. Of course the heat energy received from the sun in case of the earth.

Our calculations of these factors and hence life itself being created on earth about 2 billion years ago. The earth has got this biosphere which is defined as that part of the envelope surrounding the earth in which life thrives. The boundary of this biosphere may be roughly taken as inside the earth up to the zone having temperature within 100°C and above up to an altitude of some

10 km. Higher up the sun's stronger radiant energy of the ultraviolet rays kills all living things.

Keeping in mind all the phenomena for producing life, I shall now discuss the possibility of having life on the surface of any other planet of the solar system.

The planet nearest to the sun is Mercury which being small like the moon has got no atmosphere and being too near the sun receives maximum radiant energy from the sun for which temperature is too high on the surface of this planet, remaining always towards the sun and too low on the back surface, remaining always away from the sun to create any living matter. Whereas the planets beyond Mars, that is Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto being too far away from the sun the temperature on these planets is extremely low even lower than -150°C for which life is not possible. Only there is some possibility of having life on Venus and Mars the two planets nearest to the earth on either side of the orbit of the earth.

Venus — This planet is almost identical in size with the earth but due to extremely thick veil of atmosphere consisting mostly of carbon dioxide nothing so far was known to scientists about the planet's surface. No trace of water vapour and oxygen could be detected. Recent information received from Russian satellites Venus 5 and Venus 6 which landed on Venus in May, this year, reveals that the period of rotation of this planet on its axis is 117 terrestrial days whereas the

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Venusian Year is 225 terrestrial days. The temperature on the surface is about 400°C which is too high for the existence of any life.

Mars — This planet, although much smaller in size than the earth, has many things identical with those of the earth. Its period of rotation is about 24 hours 37 minutes, almost the same as ours. Its year is about 687 terrestrial days. The inclination of its equator with its orbit is little over than 23° which is almost the same as in the earth's case and so the same seasonal changes take place on this planet. The atmosphere surrounding Mars is thin consisting mostly of carbon dioxide and little quantity of water vapour and so the planet can be seen clearly from the earth by a telescope. No oxygen has been traced so far. The average temperature on Mars is about 60° below zero F whereas on the earth is about 60° above zero F. Snow caps on the poles are observed to increase in size in winters and decrease in summers. Some long lines are observed on its surface. These are, according to some view, artificial canals which become broader when snow melts. Some sign of greenish vegetation is also observed. As such since Galileo's time it is being believed to be inhabited by an intelligent civilization. But there is also another view contradicting this belief.

One very interesting fact about Mars is its two satellites (moons) named Deimos and Phobos, both discovered only in 1877. These satellites are very small and not exceeding 10



The 210-foot radio telescope at Parkes in Australia

miles in diameter and are very near the planet revolving in the equatorial plane. This phenomenon is not observed in the case of any other planet.

Those who believe in the existence of high type of civilization on Mars are of the opinion that the satellites are artificial and were launched millions of years ago from the planet and were remaining stationary in the equatorial plane just as the space scientists now on the earth are launching stationary satellites for world-wide communication purpose at an altitude of about 36,000 km. In course of these million years the two artificial satellites have slowly

lost their equilibrium and come down close to the planet.

We now know from the information and photos sent by the American satellites Mariner 6 and Mariner 7 that there is no nitrogen in the atmosphere of the planet which rules out the existence of any intelligent community. But traces of gases of organic compounds have been found indicating the possibility of the presence of some sort of vegetation.

Although the existence of high type of life on the present Mars is questionable, once many million years ago before the creation of life on the earth, when the atmosphere

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re on the surface of Mars did not escape so much as it is now and the condition of the surroundings of the planet was conducive to the existence of life probably the planet was inhabited by high civilization which in course of time, with the deterioration of the biosphereic condition became extinct, as will be the case on the earth.

Now I shall discuss the possibility of the existence of life on a heavenly body away from the solar system.

We know that this vast universe contains millions of galaxies, one such is our own Milky Way (in Bengali called Chaya-Pith). Each galaxy contains millions and millions of stars, one such star is our sun. Each star is an extremely hot body having internal temperature of several million degrees and several thousand degrees on the surface and radiating constantly extremely high radiant energy, the source of which is the thermonuclear reaction inside the star transforming hydrogen atoms into helium. The stars as such are disqualified for having life, by being too hot. According to present scientific beliefs, many stars have got planets.

Stars are classified according to their emission spectra into O, B, A, F, G, K, M, N stars. Our Sun is a G star. The O, B, and A group of stars are excluded since their age is believed to be less than one billion or 100 crore years, the small K and M stars have too small a thermally inhabitable zone. Favourable environment is found on late F, all G, and early K-type stars. This comprises about 10% of

the stars or about 20 million stars in our galaxy only. Similar will probably be the percentage of stars in other galaxies like Andromeda, having planets on which existence of life is possible.

The nearest stars to us fulfilling this condition are Epsilon-Eridani having surface temperature of about 4910°C and Gamma-Ceti having surface temperature more or less the same. Our sun is having a surface temperature of about 6000°C. The two stars mentioned above are about 11 light years away that is light emitted from these stars travelling through space with a speed of 186,000 miles or 300,000 km per second takes 11 years to reach us whereas light from the sun takes only about 8 minutes to reach us.

Assuming that there are heavenly bodies in the zone near about 11 light years on which life exists, say a planet of Epsilon-Eridani, the problem is how to confirm this assumption. This is possible by two methods, viz. by using space ships and by using radio signals.

The use of space ships now is not possible. The present day knowledge of rocket speed is only about 12 km/sec which can take space ships to a body in the solar system. To go beyond the gravitational pull of the sun, the speed should be about 16.8 km/sec. Even if we can attain this speed of about 17 km/sec or say 20 km/sec, no mortal human being with a span of life of about 60 years, can travel 11 light years' space with this insignificant speed because where light with a speed of 300,000 km/sec takes 11 years, one can calculate

how many thousands of years the rocket with a speed of 20 km/sec will take. So, when by our technical knowledge we can attain the speed of light or at least a high percentage of this speed, we can think of sending unmanned space ships, if manned space ships be not possible.

So at present we are to depend upon radio signals. We now know, due to wonderful achievement of radio telescopes, that radio whispers are constantly reaching us on different wavelengths from the sun, Jupiter in the solar system, from plenty of stars in our galaxy, from the remotest corners of the universe even at the unimaginable distance of 10,000 million light years away from us. These radio waves are being created in nature due to motion of electrons and are of various wavelengths, the most important being the inter-stellar hydrogen emission on 21 cm wavelength (frequency 1420 megacycles). Hydrogen is present not only inside stars but also in the inter-stellar space throughout the universe.

One school of thought assumes that if there be intelligent galactic communities, they must be familiar in transmitting radio signals and receiving them from all possible sources. They also must be knowing about the 21 cm radio signals of hydrogen emission. So they are expected to transmit intelligent messages on a wavelength in the neighbourhood of this 21 cm wavelength to another intelligent community in order to communicate with the latter. So our attempts should be to receive constantly signals on 21 cm. and nearabout

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wavelength. Our main apparatus is a radio telescope as shown in the picture.

Recently some types of radio pulses heard in radio telescopes were thought to be from intelligent beings from space. But evidence mounted that the sources could not be from planets but from stars which are now called PULSARS. However if we go on listening to the radio signals from outer space some day we may be successful in getting signals which are distinguishable from those being created automatically in nature

and probably be able to understand the messages sent.

Some view is that we shall also try to transmit on a wavelength in the neighbourhood of 21 cm. messages which will be some regular pattern prime numbers sequences arithmetic progression etc. If any intelligent community must know these. At the same time we should go on listening whether any reply be received. We should not be impatient as this may take many years.

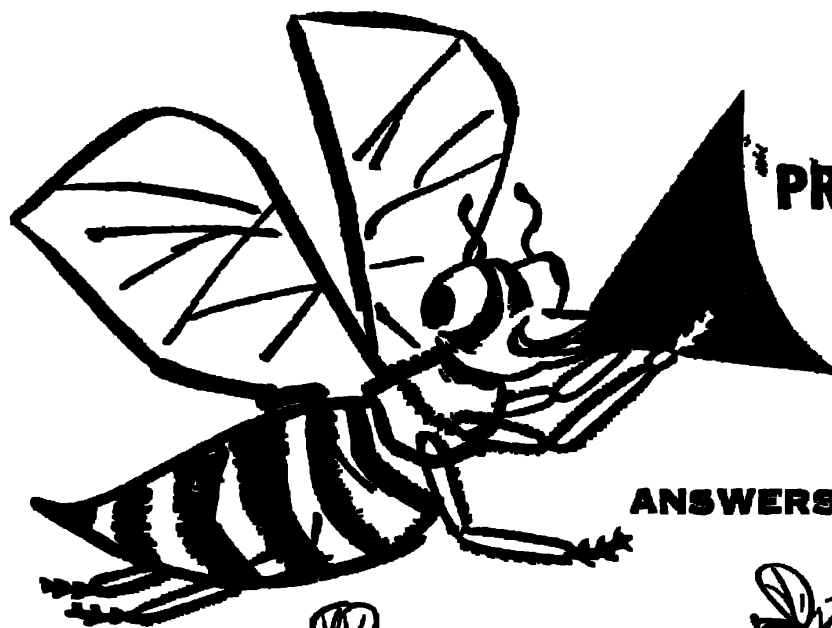
Thus from scientific arguments described above

one can conclude that there must be not only one or two but billions of planets in the universe where favourable environment, having proper temperature to create life spontaneously in nature from the simple chemical elements, is present due to which there must be not only life existing in many of them but also intelligent communities. The only question is now to establish communication between us on the earth and them on other celestial spheres. But it is sure that some day this will be done.




FIG. 1 DHIRENDRANATH DRAHMA

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IT was 24th May, 1964 and Peruvians, particularly citizens of Lima were in great excitement as Peru were playing football with Argentina in their own stadium in the elimination round for a place in the Olympic proper at Tokyo. Football in Latin American countries is

more and with the issue at stake between any two of the side Peru, Argentina or Brazil it is virtually a war with no compromise given or asked for.

By midday gates were already closed in the 50,000 capacity National Stadium at Lima. Admission in football stadium in Latin America has not much difference from what it is generally seen in India when important matches are played. Soccer fans already took their positions in the queue 72 hours ahead of time. They came from all parts of the country many with their whole families. The railway in two days ran a large number of special trains. One dollar reserved seats which fetched fivefold fancy price in open black market shot up ten fold on the day of the match. So when the team took the field on the 24th May afternoon waves of 75,000 frenzied Peruvian football fans jam-packed in the stadium were it then highest pitch.

Argentina decidedly a stronger side with five wins against Peru's two and a tie since favourite but the latter won three more games to play certainly had a fighting home and in football who knows. Besides Peruvians certainly do not want to lose a match against Argentines.

The first half went blank amidst tremendous excitement. Both the sides had equal share in attack and equal humberth escapes. Peru not only rose to the occasion to bolster Argentina's wolfpack attack but at

'A May afternoon when time stood still at Lima

MAHAVEER SAKAN

held the

the Argentine goalie at the city. All the five corners in Peru were throwing in as they had the moralistic hitting the crossbar. It was a day when Peru had a

And then it happened. And as through the second half Argentina took the lead when her inside right foot scored a brilliant goal from the middle. The whole stadium groaned in a mental agony. Fans were high and so were the eases and

o, the. As the time was approaching end Peru grew desperate. With hardly ten minutes to go, they threw all caution to winds and with a minimum attack did level the score when their three quarter with a leap change in position trapped a through and passed it to the right in who slammed the ball home. The mighty roar of 75,000 full throated Peruvians shook the whole capital. But then followed a hushed silence. R. Angel Pizos de Ungarayun referee disallowed the goal penalising a Peruvian forward for rough

moment and then fell loose in the National. While on the ground even players

and fans decision prevented Argentina from playing the ball for a lack infuriated crowd in the stadium grabbed every thing they could obtain from the spectators beer bottles on top to bench planks back and steel window frame smashed from the walls and buried them on the ground.

one and one of his and setting a record

their mouth they crossed the high separation the playing area from the spectators gallery scaled the nine foot high concrete barricade with barbed wire topped fence and rushed towards the frightened referee. Bombs brandishing a huge butchers knife. The cry went up. Muera Bomba — there goes Bomba. The police who were already inside the field hardly had the time to throw a cordon round the players and supervisors but were able to intercept Roff before he could reach the referee but then several other frenzied fans also scaled

A MAY AFTERNOON WHEN TIME STOOD STILL AT LIMA

the wall and rushed inside the ground.

Frenzied fans called the game off and ran along with the players towards the steel emergency exit wherefrom the police bundled them off in a bus to an unknown destination. With the game abandoned and referee and the players out of the field the crowd went berserk. The barbed wire fencing and the gates to the playing enclosure gave way under pressure and thousands rushed to the field to attack the police.

Mounted policemen now rushed in the arena. They tried to force the rioters towards the exit gates charging them with batons and tear gas grenades. Shots were also fired in the air to scare away the mob. This tactics was a blunder and proved fatal as most of the exit gates were locked with the gate-men and guards themselves enjoying the game like any other soccer fans from the stand. In the confusion panic and stampede that followed they failed to open the gates in time and were crushed to death by the surging mass. Frenzied mob attacked the police and fought among themselves to escape from the stadium. Knives, hatchets and pistols were freely used. Those who had no weapons fought with bare hands. Many of the gentlemen in the stadium were seized by hands and feet swung and hurled down on the floor of the concrete ditch fifty feet below. Several were strangled to death by their own wrists. Police themselves now panicky lost all control and started firing upon the mob. A few who still stood firm and kept their heads cool and tried to pacify the crowd were swept aside and trampled by the mass in their mad stampede for the exit gates. Many who brought their whole families in the match lost all the members.

At the stadium's north end where the casualties were the heaviest, three of the five gates

remained closed. Waves upon waves of frenzied, screaming and struggling mass of humanity struck repeatedly against the gates trampling and swamping everything before them until the steel gates gave way. The surging mob surged over the crushed dead bodies to the corridors.

Over 500 dead bodies trampled and mutilated beyond recognition were recovered from these three gates alone. At places they lay eight deep. Many were reduced to jelly and could be taken out by spoons. Limbs were torn from bodies. Strips of skins were seen sticking on the walls and gates. All through the night fire brigades and ambulances screeched through the stadium and adjoining areas picking up dead and injured. By next day it was found on a rough estimate 500 people lost their lives at the stadium and over 4000 wounded many of whom later succumbed to their injuries in hospital. Many who survived could not withstand the shock and went out of their minds.

Outside the ground's four gangs of Peruvian rioters and sex-starved desperados came through the streets setting fire to cars, buses and warehouses, looting and murdering innocent women. Police fired whole night on the riotous mob.

Peruvians subsequently protested in the Parliament against the police excess and mismanagement and corruption in sport. President Fernando Belaunde Terry ordered a thorough investigation into the matter. A bill was subsequently passed by the Peruvian Parliament for provision of pension and financial assistance to the helpless families of the victims. Funerals of all who were killed in the riot were paid by the Government.

So ended the day when hell was let loose and time stood still at Lima. Jorge Basadre one of leading philosophers of Latin America of the present day while analysing the possible

causes of the football riot at Peru, tried to find out an answer. Basadre said:

'OUR people specially of the lower strata of the society are full of tensions and frustrations dark pent up passions and anger. This situation has become all the more acute under the impact of population explosion and poverty of the mass.

'THESE frustrated people have now lost all their faith and hope. When this happens, then sometimes people will behave more like brutes than men.'

Even on the other side of the globe is far away from India. But what Basadre said about Peru equally concerns this country of ours. India with its present day nepotism, corruption, rank inefficiency and utter bankruptcy in the administrative machinery sounds a wonderful similarity with some of the Latin American countries. Here too here is the same poverty, unemployment, rank exploitation and frustration so much so as a large section of people have lost all faith and hope and have come down to a life of aim and quiver.

The pent up fury of the frustrated people of a city often seen in a football ground in public meeting, in our college, in universities and even in our own homes. May be the mobsters are not always sincere but they are generally not in Latin American countries. Yet whenever blame we may throw at the professional rowdies they are there. It is really of no use when some of our professional leaders who muddle in almost everything come forward with a ready-made solution branding one section of people or the other as outlaws. Sermons and missives are tossed in cavalier fashion and suggestions offered in no time. But the problem is too deep and the real solution certainly lies elsewhere.

Stimulus

[REDACTED]

4422

On a stage adapted to the four days play which the second act is being presented in this

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streams—you who move or are motionless are insensate or sensible—to you I make my obeisance

[Offstage faint music of flutes, coming from afar Rishyashringa does not hear.]

Fluent are my days as they pass. Up in the third watch of the night, the bath at dawn, the yogic posture, the breathing exercises, meditation, the chanting of hymns. The cow to be milked, firewood to be gathered, the sacred fire to be kept up, the worship to be prepared, the sacred pots to be cleaned—these are the tasks of my forenoons. Afternoons I have sessions with my father: the subject of our study is the Veda with all their limbs, and the end of the Vedas as well. A very abstruse science so father tells me. But I feel it is all very simple, clear and convincing as daylight. I am not intellectually gifted as father is. I cannot grasp any debatable points. When, at dusk, we rest our bodies on deer-skins after eating some fruit, I submit one or two questions to father. He says the Brahman-science is not accessible to all for that loneliness is enjoined and intense concentration. Over there, on the other bank of the river, is a crowded city where people are false in speech, wilful in conduct and impure in their pursuits. So I have heard father say. But I ask myself: which is the creature but wants to rejoice? And one whose goal is joy can he but long for Brahman? What else is there desirable? I have heard father say that these forests have ghouls and ogres roaming in them that I must be on my guard when he is away. But I feel no fear. Ghouls—ogres—flesh-eating beasts—why should they injure me? And how should I know which ogre is a god in disguise and which beast a sage under a curse?

[Offstage music of stringed instruments nearer now Rishyashringa does not hear.]

But in this world of mortals nothing is uninterrupted. I have my bad days, too. Then it seems my daylong devotions are but a habit, all

unfelt in my inmost being. Then fire sheds no brightness, the wind is stilled, and my heart remains closed to Vedic rhythms. But again, there are days when my vision grows lucid, I see all things as alive as meaningful, a godly light sets my thoughts aglow. One such day is this.

[Offstage, music of stringed instruments grows clearer Rishyashringa catches the sound, strains his ears to listen.]

Sweet how sweet are these notes! Like my deepest longings embodied in sound. Wherefrom? Nearby is no other hermitage. Have some acolytes just arrived, singing hymns to the gods?

**(Offstage, chorus of women sing.)*

*Inake the breath that stilled
When Vishnu's lotus bloomed,
And Languor as split
Into multitudinous forms,*

*And on the frozen mountain-peak
Warmth of woman fell
And uncurled of loneliness the
Ore*

I summed a dual role

RISHYASHRINGA. Profound—realted—superbly sweet! A hymn I had never heard before—who was the sage who sang it first? And what marvellous voices—like the notes of the koel, the gurgling of rivulets—no, sweeter still. Who could these acolytes be? I think they have progressed far in their austerities but I am still a beginner. Many are the sacred songs I haven't yet heard and the sciences I don't yet know. My heart goes out to them—those virtuous ones—like a swan drawn toward the Crystal Mountain.

[Tarangini enters. Her steps are slow, her garments colourful and diaphanous, her every limb is adorned with ornament. She carries various offerings in her hand.]

TARANGINI (putting down the offerings). Jewel of devotion, does all go well with you? No lack of fruits in this forest, I presume? And

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your father—surely his splendour has not diminished? And you breathe happily, I hope? It's my hankering to see you has brought me here.

RISHYASHRINGA (*remains silent for a while gazing intently at his guest*) Hermit, who are you? Which holy place is the seat of your piety? How hard were the mortifications that gave you this body of gold? (*Observing Lalangini from head to foot*) A god under a curse are you? Or have you descended from Heaven to reward me for some good work I have performed unwittingly? How bright the rays of your virtue! how compassionate is your glance! how rich in loveliness your speech! I feel a rare gratification just at the sight of you. Do accept my homage.

LALANGINI Best of sages I am not worthy of your salutation. It is I who should offer you homage. I approach you with a prayer. Grant me your help in the performance of my vows.

RISHYASHRINGA Talented are what can I offer you as a gift. You shine like a brilliant thought in image of godly genius. Are you then one of the wise ones who had seen the lighted shore across the seas of darkness? Beauty sits on you. For O hermit your body is like sacred flames, untainted by mirth, your arm and neck and hips move to the rhythms of the Rik metre. Joy flows from your eyes, joy gives motion to your feet, your lips are lit with universal compassion. What a moment good while I bring you food offering and water to wash your feet.

Exit Rishyashringa. Lalangini watches him go.

LALANGINI I never thought it would be so easy, but the outcome is still uncertain. What I needed—self confidence, and self control. A single mistake—a moment's unmindfulness—and I may have to return in shame. "Joy flows from your eyes, joy gives motion to your feet." Has he really taken me for a sage or a fallen god? (*Laughing gently*)

Boy a mere boy! Has never seen a woman, nor a young man, either. But are there no pools in this forest? Hasn't he ever seen himself—in some limpid sheet of water—on a windless unclouded afternoon? Beauty sits on your face like sacred flames, your body!—Who is saying this and to whom? (*Pause*) I know I am not ill-favoured. I am known as a beauty in town—but—why haven't I heard this said before, in tones like these? (*Pause*) How he had fixed his gaze on me. Was it I he was looking at? (*Glancing at her at her thighs, and feet*) Tell me Mother, am I really so beautiful. My lovers in the city of Champa—tell me—really? (*After a pause with a ripple of laughter*) What a joke it would be—a priceless joke—when on going back I relate this story to my friends gathered together at my house. They'll all be there—my pretty beau—Chandiketu, Adhikarna, Kivu, Devala, Pujanja—and my dear companions the girls Ratimanjari, Bamakshi, Anantabai and the rest—we'll sit in a circle with our bowls well filled—and then I'll relate the story in full detail—how I had turned this hermit into a eophyte of the Kama god. How they'll roar with laughter on hearing of this Brahmin boy devoid of common sense! (*It is a lot of*

to go) Joy flows from your eyes, joy gives motion to your feet. (*About to laugh but stops abruptly*) But better not be jubilant in advance. Better to get a good reminder for those sand pieces of gold and christs and the apparel, jewellers—all the things of a princess. And if I should fail—what a shame! When I go out into the streets of Champa they'll point their fingers at me and say: Here's that conceited courtesan whose pride was crushed by Rishyashringa. Gay young men deeming me unworthy will look around for other girls. I with my mother shall fall from wealth to misery, from fame to black neglect. What a shame! What a foul blot on my character! But no—no—I will not let that happen. Look here he comes. Is there a man in Champa who equals him in beauty? And will there be a woman luckier than I if—if I can win this luck for myself? The how of

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my trial approaches May all the
Virtues protect me !

*Enters Rishyashringa carrying a mat,
a jar of water and some fruits on
a leaf-tray*

RISHYASHRINGA I have been
long you are not displeased ? I have
gathered fruit from the forest and
drawn the water from the river And
here is a glass-mat, cushioned with
deer skin soft and pleasant to touch
*(Putting down the things on the
ground)* Sit down, sir, perform your
ablutions Here are myobalan fruits,
and some nuts and berries They
have ripened well, it would please
my heart if you partake of them at
your will And then if you hold me
at all at all of affection for
me has dawned in you then rest
here for some time do not leave My
fruit for you grows You to behold,
your words to listen to that's what
I do no more and more If indeed,
you are not a god why do I feel it's
you I have been waiting for all this
time

TARANGINI Gent of holiness,
I am no god I was born in the race
of men to minister to others needs is
my way I have come here to serve
you not to be felicitated It is
against my vows to accept gifts

RISHYASHRINGA Tell me
about your vows

TARANGINI I am sworn to the
worship of the Bodhi's god

RISHYASHRINGA The Bodhi-
tree and I am not sure I have heard
of him Tell me how is this worship
performed ? What are its rules of
conduct its methods ceremonies ? I
am quite ignorant Teach me

TARANGINI To give myself
away that is my rule of conduct

RISHYASHRINGA The sages
sing the praise of self sacrifice

TARANGINI Holy sir, I know
nothing of the world to be It inspira-
tion I go by To give myself is
my delight and the fulfilment of
my being To give myself to one
and all even is the tree which
yields its fruit to bird and beast and
insect

RISHYASHRINGA I too know
little of the divine science But some-
times I feel I am one with one and

all With beasts, birds, and trees
With the whole universe

TARANGINI Godly one, I am
a dualist Always I search my part-
ner, the other one who will accept
me This is my method Abandon-
ment of shame and hate is the cere-
mony I perform

RISHYASHRINGA Tell me,
what are the hymns you chant ? And
have you any rituals ?

TARANGINI Hymns I sing to
Desire, Affection is my ritual, Union-
in-joy is the object of my meditation
Singleness is forbidden in my path
of virtue Two acolytes must together
perform these vows And this is
why I am here today, to throw my-
self on your mercy

RISHYASHRINGA It all grows
clear now Why the rising sun touch-
ed my heart with a gentle ray, when
with folded hands I saluted him at
dawn Why the singing I heard a
little later was so entrancing They
were all announcing this event, this
fortune that has befallen me The
spirit of the Sky, the light of the
Sun and Wind, the promoter of
motion—gods who bless me this morn-
ing of you they were all messen-
gers

TARANGINI *(moving closer to
Rishyashringa)* I, too have travelled
a long way to come to you, O sage
You are my prayed-for boon To give
myself to you is the good work I want
to accomplish

RISHYASHRINGA I am inex-
perienced in your mode of worship,
but command me if I can help

TARANGINI *(moving still
closer)* Not by knowledge is my
worship performed but by loving-
devotion I say to you again it is
you I have chosen and must propi-
tiate If you should refuse my wish,
my vows will not be fulfilled

RISHYASHRINGA *(with a mag-
nified look in his eye in a deep
voice)* I rejoice O godly being I
await your pleasure

*[A long pause The following
speech of Tarangini will begin
very softly and become gradually
louder She will move or dance
around Rishyashringa in circles
while chanting these words]* . .

TARANGINI, Comes the time.

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Let the ritual begin (*Flute music, offstage*) Awake, O sleepers! Sleep, O wakeful ones! Let the stone melt, the torrent be freed, and motion prevail! Let the wheel turn, let life be triumphant, let death be triumphant! Seeds in the field, in the field the ploughman, seeds in the womb, water in woman! Seeds, trees, flowers, fruits, seeds trees! By death the fruit is plucked, so death conquers! Death is rent by the seed so life conquers! Welcome sleep, welcome the fall into the night! welcome waking, welcome the ascent into light! (*Music stops*) — Excellent sir, stay here and do not move while I praise you and honour you according to the prescribed rules

(Tarangini comes forward and stands very close to Rishyashringa, face to face with him)

This garland is for you! Accept! (*Putting a garland around his neck*) This is the first stage of my worship!

RISHYASHRINGA Fragrant flowers! fragrant body! fragrant breath!

TARANGINI But I do not touch the feet of him I worship! I embrace him!

RISHYASHRINGA Embrace! As sleepers embrace trees!

TARANGINI Just so! (*Makes a gesture of embrace*) This is the second stage of my worship! I am now duty-bound to kiss your mouth!

RISHYASHRINGA Kiss? As the bee licks the honey-bud?

TARANGINI Just so! (*Makes the gesture of a kiss*) This is the third stage of my worship! O Jewel of ascetics! I will now offer you the gifts I have brought you, as enjoined by my vows! This fruit is meant for your taking! This food is meant for your taking! This water is meant for your taking! Accept and enjoy them, lord!

(Rishyashringa accepts food and drink from Tarangini's hands)

RISHYASHRINGA Delicious fruit! Delicious food! Delicious water!

TARANGINI Now, sir, please give me what is left over! I eat no thing except the remnants of the man at whose service I put myself

May this fruit be consecrated by you! (*Touches a fruit to Rishyashringa's lips and eats it*) May this food be consecrated by you! (*Touches food to Rishyashringa's lips and eats*) May this water be consecrated by you! (*Touches a bowl to Rishyashringa's lips and drinks*) Lord, are you happy?

RISHYASHRINGA Honey is water, honey is food, honey is speech, honey is beauty!

TARANGINI Honey in glance, honey in odours, honey in touch, and honey in remembrance!

(*Soft music, offstage* During the following speech, Tarangini will move or dance in widening circles with graceful gestures. Offstage drums will beat to rhythm marking each of her sentences. Toward the end she will move further from the centre of the stage scatter flowers on the ground, glance back many a time and then go out.)

TARANGINI (*her voice is soft at the start but grows gradually louder as the tempo quickens*) Wakens the beast! Sleep is fled! Lulled are the wakeful ones! Dense stars, waterfalls foam! Gatherings of cloud, flashes of lightning, the thunder loosed! Descends the rain! Sounding re-sounding! From breath to breath, from body to body, from longing to longing—echoes! Athirst is earth, the skies bring solace! Athirst the skies, the seas bring solace! Moisture from oceans in clouds it congeals, in rain it dissolves! From limb to limb runs lightning, the blood's on fire! Demolished is thought by the thunderbolt! Flames of fire, pour! Pour! torrential waters! For you I thirst, in you my solace! For me you thirst in me your solace! Raised is the hood of the Serpent, the seas are chained—seething, writhing, seething! Violence of winds, commotion in clouds, filled are the holes of the earth! Raining, staining, streaming!

(*Leaves* Tarangini slowly, the stage darkens, and then grows brighter than before! It is nearly noon! Rishyashringa is sitting in front of the cottage, lost in thought.)

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enters Vibhandaka. He is hairy, unmouth, hairy-looking!

VIBHANDAKA (*on entering, with a startled look*) How is this? This foul, acid, impure smell? The hermitage is in disorder. The courtyard is unclean. Here are half-eaten fruits, crushed flowers, water spilled from jars. Who defiled this sacred spot? Looks like marks of evil, signs of some sinful deed. Rishyashringa, my son!

[*Rishyashringa, who was not aware of his father's presence, now notices him, and stands up!*]

VIBHANDAKA Son, were you molested by some wild boar this morning? Or did a jealous demon overpower you? How did you spend your forenoon? I see all your tasks have remained unaccomplished. Why didn't you gather the firewood? Or offer oblation to the fire-vessel? Why is the worship not prepared? And did you milk the cow that yields the sacrificial butter?

RISHYASHRINGA Father I observed another vow this morning.

VIBHANDAKA Another vow? But you have no other one. You are my son — and my disciple. Rigid is our devotion, our discipline unshakable. In our observance of rules we suffer no laxity. Son, you were a child when I had initiated you into the holy life. Not a day has passed since then when you violated any of the commandments. But why do you look so different today? Sorrowful, absent-minded, poor in spirit? Why is your gaze fixed at the distance, why that pallor on your face, those sighs and trembling lips? And why, of all things, that garland dangling from your neck? You surely know that the wearing of flowers is forbidden for ascetics?

RISHYASHRINGA I was visited by a guest this morning. This garland is a token of his compassion.

VIBHANDAKA Who could that person be? Tell me, son, who caused in you this estrangement from yourself? Give me details.

RISHYASHRINGA Father, he was a marvellous hermit. Not tall, not short either, resplendent as a god. Golden his complexion gleaming and

blueblack his locks, and arranged in loops and braids. His figure was well shaped and rich in beckoning curves. Like a conch-shell was his neck, his ears like burnished ritual-pots. Large and moist were his eyes, his cheeks had the hue of the infant sun, his face was radiant like Dawn. His arms, breast, and feet were quite hairless. On his breast shone two lobes of flesh, exceedingly fat to behold, rounded like the rice-offerings dear to our gods. His garb was pellucid and colourful, his beads strung-sparkled like the rays of the moon, the sacred thread he wore was not like ours at all. Father, the devotional marks on his body were strange and luminous, shaped like wheel- or the new moon, and shimmering like drops of water. Melody issues from these objects, whenever he moves his arms or feet—sweet as our hymns to the gods or the joyous notes of swain in a lake. It is the sight of this god-like hermit that has overwhelmed me, Father.

VIBHANDAKA Did you bid welcome to this person?

RISHYASHRINGA I did try to honour him as laid down in the Law. But he declined my offerings out of modesty. To minister to others is my way, except my gifts, good sir? This was what he told me. He sought my help in the observance of his vows which were dualistic—But, Father, why that redness of wrath in your eyes?

VIBHANDAKA Did you not drive out that evil apparition?

RISHYASHRINGA Evil, did you say? (*Radiantly*) Father, he looked like a dweller-in-Brahman who could grant the boon of Safety-from-Fear.

VIBHANDAKA Fool! Ignorant fool!

RISHYASHRINGA I do deserve this rebuke, for the progress I have made in my studies is scanty. But my thirst for knowledge increased when I saw him, Father. I realised that many mysteries of worship have not yet revealed to me.

VIBHANDAKA Wicked! All his precautions wicked!

RISHYASHRINGA Why these apprehensions, Father? I tell you, I observed this visitor very closely, but nowhere in him could I detect a

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olemnish, even as small as a sesame seed. Surely his path of virtue is very exalted, why, else, did I rejoice at the very sight of him and why this strange new flutter in my heart? Dear father, when he spoke to me all my soul was enraptured for his voice was like the lyre of some heavenly sage, and his diction sonorous as sacred songs.

VIBHANDAKA folly, alas! Delusion, alas!

RISHYASHRINGA Your agitation is ungrounded. Father, When you have heard me to the end, you, too, will be convinced of his transcendent virtue. Plucked from the trees of Heaven they seemed, the fruits he gave me to eat, our berries and nuts are not to be compared with them in taste or fluid or substance. Wonderful water he gave me too, on drinking it I felt I was transposed to the realm of the king of gods, my body seemed freed from gross matter, as though I could move without touching the earth. Father, aren't you glad of this luck that has come to me?

VIBHANDAKA Stop, Rishyashringa, say no more! My head is splitting.

RISHYASHRINGA Permit me, Father, to tell you about his devotion. His voice when he chants his prayers is not deep or upraised but so sweet and tuneful that it touches the inmost soul. After finishing his songs of praise, he this critic of surpassing beauty stretched his arm and embraced me as creepers embrace the tree. Then he touched my face with his hand and with lips joined to mine he kissed me—as bees kiss the flower. Never before had I known such rapture as spread through my veins at that moment as if my whole being had tasted of ambrosia. But he did not stop here with me, he moved around me in circles in motions as graceful as waves, he scattered on the ground garlands of rare fragrance, perfumed the air with his touch and then returned to his own hermitage. I now miss him, Father, it is because he is out of sight that dejection has mastered me. Father, grant me this wish, let me go away in his search or bring him back to our grove. His vows I want to observe, jointly with

him I want to worship the gods. This my utmost desire I submit to you.

VIBHANDAKA Son, you have been deceived!

RISHYASHRINGA Deceived!

VIBHANDAKA Deceived—tempted—stained with sin!

RISHYASHRINGA Sin!

VIBHANDAKA The creature whom you saw and touched was no hermit nor a virtuous man, nor a man either, but a woman.

RISHYASHRINGA Woman? Father, what sort of a being is a woman?

VIBHANDAKA Even from the awareness of sin I protected you, there I was wrong. The possibilities of sin are endless and it moves everywhere. One must know what it is in order to be safe from contamination. Listen, my son. The Begetter-God created two kinds of creatures, male and female. The females are those who receive the seed in their wombs and nourish the offspring with their breast-milk. Son, here in our hermitage you have seen some dogs, and also our cow with calves. As they are among beasts so are women in the human kind.

RISHYASHRINGA If my visitor of this morning was a woman, then, Father, woman is but another name for the perfection of loveliness.

VIBHANDAKA Call it utility, son. An instrument of motherhood—well constructed—that's what a woman amounts to. And that mechanical fitness seems appealing to the menfolk—such is the law of the Begetter-God. How else should mankind be rescued from the jaws of Time, the Devourer? And who will remain to offer those fire-oblations whose fumes are pleasing to the gods? Hence this contrivance of the Fixer of the Law. As fire can be lit only by rubbing two sticks of wood, even so is this. As butter is produced by the combined action of the vessel and the churning rod, even so is this. Like fishes trapped in the nets of fishermen, like moths burnt in a flame to ashes, even so do ignorant men and women perish in each other's arms. Eternal is this device—unalterable.

RISHYASHRINGA Then was I, too, born of woman?

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VIBHANDAKA Yes, my son, you also. Do you want to hear the story of your birth?

RISHYASHRINGA Sir if your patience does not wear out, my attention will not slacken.

[Slowly the stage darkens. Then in half-light is seen Vibhandaka as a young man sitting in a yoga posture, engaged in meditation. Soft music of instruments, offstage, a dancer in diaphanous clothes appears as in a dream. Vibhandaka opens his eyes, the dream-figure begins to dance. She seems to float in air in rhythmic movements as she glides away and vanishes. Mime acting of Vibhandaka, signifying the awakening of lust. He gets up on his feet, his face grows distorted, he wanders up and down confusedly. Then his glance falls on a young woman of the hunting tribe. He moves toward her, mechanically, as if in a trance. Mime acting of the woman signifying entreaty and resistance. Beseeching and passionate gestures of Vibhandaka. Piteous gestures of the woman. Vibhandaka grows bold and aggressive. Then the woman is also roused. She gives a voluptuous smile as Vibhandaka stretches his arms toward her. For a moment or two the hermit is seen joined in an embrace with the woman of the wilds.]

During this scene Vibhandaka and Rishyashringa will not be seen on the stage, but their dialogue will continue. They will speak slowly with pauses, their speeches and the mime acting will be synchronous.

VIBHANDAKA Listen, my son. Once, when I was young I was sitting in meditation on a slope of the Vindhya hill. It was spring, the woodlands were gay with fragrance and the twittering of birds. But I had fixed my mind on the still point of the Brahman. It was then that I suddenly caught sight of Urvashi, in the bright sphere of Aether.

RISHYASHRINGA Urvashi? Who is she, Father?

VIBHANDAKA The heavenly nymph, Urvashi. A companion of the frolic of the gods. A means to hinder the strivers after holiness and make havoc of their vows.

RISHYASHRINGA Father, is woman, then, desired by the gods also?

VIBHANDAKA Son, the somnuthinkers are nothing but magnified mortals. They, too, perish in the last dissolution. They, too, are hidden, not the mover, not endless and without beginning, but merely active agents, subject to the law of Karma, of necessity. He who is immanent, transcendent, eternal, is no other than Brahman. This Brahman we meditate upon—But at that moment my thoughts went astray.

RISHYASHRINGA Father, is she whom you call Urvashi, visible by mortals too?

VIBHANDAKA Maybe it was not Urvashi really, but an illusion composed of clouds and sunlight. Or perhaps a reflection of my hidden longings. Or a mirage it may be—a product of my fasts and loneliness. Nevertheless my affliction grew intolerable and I arose from my meditations. Roaming in the woods, my son I spied a daughter of the wilds and her I embraced. When in due course the woman was delivered of a son I picked up the child and came away to another forest—to this hermitage by the river. Rishyashringa do not worry about me. I atoned for my sin with severe mortifications.

[The stage lights up. Young Vibhandaka and the woman of the hunting tribe have disappeared. We return to the present time.]

RISHYASHRINGA Father, where is my mother now—that woman of the wilds?

VIBHANDAKA I do not know. I had immediately lost all interest in her and on no other woman have I since cast a glance. Since then, I have had only two objects to cherish and contemplate—you, my son, and He who is dearer than sons, the Brahman. Here in this forest you were nursed by the doves who gave you their breast, for company you

had animals and trees—and had me, your father. Ever since you were little, you have heard me recite the Vedas, the holy smell of oblations has nourished your awakening senses—Rishvashringa, have you ever regretted you had no mother to love you?

RISHVASHRINGA How can one regret the loss of a thing of which one can form no idea at all?

VIBHANDAKA Listen, Rishvashringa. I will now tell you an eternal truth. Woman is the mother, hence a necessity. But for ascetics she is as fatal as for animals, the sting of venomous serpents. Most carefully had I kept our grove isolated, bereft of all human association. Let by some mischance our pieties be vanquished through contact with woman. And yet the evil thing has happened—our sacred grove has been polluted, that hell-pit and you, my son, have been bewitched. It was doom that stood before you this morning, you have seen its cavernous mouth, you have been licked by its lolling tongue. Wake up, Rishvashringa, wake up!

RISHVASHRINGA (*rather half-heartedly*) Command me, sir.

VIBHANDAKA Woman is the charmer desired even by the gods, but ascetics can tear through their web of illusion. Only they. Thus it is why there is none higher than them. Greater than god, are the heavenly sages, adored by Indra the Thunder-bearer and Varuna the Ocean-lord and the seven piercing Suns. Heaven trembles at a glance cast from the corner of their eyes. Third of this only the dwellers-in-Brahman, the absolutely stumblers, ascetics, can overcome a power which sways all creatures—insects, birds, and beasts, fishes in the water, men and demons, and demi-gods, and the gods as well. Human they too are, these pious ones, creatures as much as the others, but they transcend the law of the created world. What an incredible triumph! What immeasurable courage! You, Rishvashringa, are set on that path of glory. Pure-hearted you are, able to think and discriminate. Do not now slip into error and ruin the fruits of your piety, do not let yourself be caught in the conspiracy of nature. Heed my words. I am your father, an aged man, and yet I

know that I am no seer but only an officiating priest, not one of the great-souled ones but only a practitioner of rituals. But—in you I have discerned the marks of the true seer. To become a creator of the holy world not created merely to receive a revelation of Brahman, and not merely learn the scriptures, that is your destiny. To you the three worlds will render homage— you, Rishvashringa, son of humble Vibhandaka! My child, do not frustrate me in this hope.

RISHVASHRINGA Father, I cried through ignorance today, forgive me. Your teachings have opened my eye of discrimination. Now I am full of fear. Let me go and enter the forest.

VIBHANDAKA Better that I go and hunt it and you stop here at the hermitage. First of all I must track out that sinful female and punish her. Perhaps she is hiding somewhere nearby. She will not so unethically catch sight of her—son, remove from your thoughts this undisciplined notion. Give no quarter to her either in your dream or imagination. If he returns during my absence, remain firm and unshaken. Sit in yoga posture and, but your doors of perception. Then no harm will befall you.

(*Exit Vibhandaka*.)

RISHVASHRINGA (*coming up and down*) Woman—woman—woman. A new name, a new form, a new word. Another world. Charming, weaver of lovely illusions, Urvashi. A new hymn to chant.

A woman of the wild, yes, my mother. My father had embraced her in the forest. My father.

You then, my woman? No hermit no man either, but a woman? Woman—and in me, you and I, capture life that did my father know it? And was my mother, intruder as you are? I will return from nothing to retain your vibrant touch. I will forbear from eating, that your kiss may remain in full bloom. I will desist from sleeping, and sink into an infinite contemplation of you. I will renounce all things else. Where are you? Here—here—and here—just a moment ago, why not now? Separation from you is my

THE HERMIT AND THE GURU

pang, absence from your sight is my
anguish. Return Return
[Music offstage, soft but quick in
tempo Rishyashringa joins
his ears]

[Offstage chorus of women sing]
Waken O beast waken O beast,
Waken, O beast
Heart, awake dreams, awake
Sleep no more sleep no more,
Sleep no more sleep no more.
Come lightning comes thunder.
Come, rain

In the full moon-
light he will be here and
I will be there.
[Music offstage]

RISHYASHRINGA Come
TARANGINI I have come to say
farewell Why do I see you cheer-
less?

RISHYASHRINGA I suffer
TARANGINI Best of hermits,
are you also subject to suffering?

RISHYASHRINGA I am burn-
ing And the cause of this—is you
TARANGINI Virtuous one if I
have offended you unawares do for-
give me Be restored to tranquillity
and give me leave to go

RISHYASHRINGA Do not go
Do not leave me

TARANGINI But if it is I who
have caused your sickness then the
remedy lies in my removal

RISHYASHRINGA Your vows
remain unfulfilled

TARANGINI My vows are in-
terminable

RISHYASHRINGA (with open
arms) Come fulfil your vows to the
end

TARANGINI Jewel of devotion
I am afraid Where is that glance of
yours bright and brimming with
mercy? Where is your face—with
that exalted, joyous expression?

RISHYASHRINGA I have learnt
who you are A woman

TARANGINI Noble youth I am
your serving maid

RISHYASHRINGA I have learnt
who I am A man

TARANGINI My beloved you
are My friend My victim And my
god

RISHYASHRINGA Hunger in
me is you Food I need is you My
consuming desire is you

TARANGINI Treasure of my

heart you are,
RISHYASHRINGA And you
the fire in my blood.

TARANGINI Devotee for me I
adore—is you.

RISHYASHRINGA Booty I
me to plunder—is you.

TARANGINI Say, you will
mine for ever!

RISHYASHRINGA I need
—you are a necessity.

TARANGINI Come, then come
away with me. Come where I
hide you for ever in my heart

RISHYASHRINGA No matter
where I go. No matter where I do
I want you. I want you I want you
'moves toward Tarangini with
stretched arms)

TARANGINI Lover, come! Come,
my palpable god! Come, salvation!

RISHYASHRINGA Chatter,
come! Come, palpable body! Come
fulfilment!

[Slowly the stage darkens In a
dim light are seen Rishyashrin-
ga and Tarangini, locked in em-
brace This lasts for a moment
or two When the lights go up
again the scene has changed It
is a main street in Champa The
sky is overcast with clouds
Claps of thunder Flashes of
lightning Offstage, the crowd
clamouring Surrounded by
Tarangini and her girl compa-
nions Rishyashringa enters and
crosses the stage At once it be-
gins to rain with a sharp, pat-
tering noise]

VOICES OF WOMEN (offstage)
Rain! Rain! Rain!

VOICES OF MEN (offstage)
Saviour we salute you

VOICES OF WOMEN (offstage)
Provider we salute you

VOICES OF MEN (offstage),
Reviver, we salute you

VOICES OF WOMEN (offstage)
Blessed is the sage, Rishyashringa!

VOICES OF MEN (offstage)
Blessed is the sage Rishyashringa!

VOICES OF MEN AND WOMEN
(in chorus, offstage) Blessed is the
sage Rishyashringa!

(The curtain comes down on the
noise of rain and the crowd's
jubilation)

[Translated by the author from his
Bengali.]

HORNBILLS

yellow as is the base of the casque for one-third of its length. The remainder of the casque which has a total length of eight inches is black. Unlike the other larger representative of the family this Pied Horn-

bird's make-up. Most of them have ~~the~~ ^{the} features absent under the wings which makes their flight noisy. They are remarkable for the enormous size of their beaks. These are surmounted by a large

nators that enable the bird to produce its exceptionally loud cry.

It must be mentioned, however that the beak of the Helmet Hornbill of Sumatra and Borneo differs from that of any other kind inasmuch as its helmet is both solid and heavy and very much resembles the consistency of ivory. These Hornbills are captured for the sake of their casques upon the surface of which the native craft men execute carvings that are sometimes sold as love charms. The casque is also cut into transverse sections and converted into brooches and other decorative ornaments.



"SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. The male Hornbill—both male and female—of the helmeted species—the voluntary prisoner during the incubation period and for the first few days after the young are hatched.

bill is not a denizen of deep moist evergreen jungles but of deciduous forest in hilly country.

As a family Hornbill possesses several peculiarities. All have eyelids, an unusual feature in a

bird's helmet. But although the bill of a Hornbill is both heavy and unobtrusive it is really placed in the interior of the cellular structure. The cell, so it is suggested, probably act as reso-

Hornbills do not chisel out holes in trees for nesting purposes but their nesting arrangements differ from those of all other birds thereby proving beyond all doubt that they are queer customers. Speaking in general terms the female Hornbill when the time comes for her to nest enters a natural cavity in the trunk of a large branch of some tree and there without any further attempt at nest construction proceeds to lay her eggs or eggs. Her first egg laid once an entrance she sets about enclosing herself in the chamber by applying her droppings mixed with some mud brought by the male to the sides of the entrance hole until only a narrow vertical slit is left, through which the male feeds his wife regularly and devotedly until sometime after the young have hatched. The side walls in the meantime having become so very hard that no natural enemy such as

HORNBILLS

monkey or cat can have access to her inside.

The incubation period is about thirty days for the Common Grey Hornbill. During her self-imposed incarceration the female Hornbill undergoes a moult of at least her wing and tail feathers and at one stage she is quite flightless.

The male must certainly be a devoted member to look after and feed the imprisoned family with such single-mindedness and avoiding the many temptations falling in the path of a free individual.

It is of absorbing interest watching food supply by the male Hornbill and feeding the broody in con-

with his throat full of berries or other titbits to feed the hungry female. Generally the food is regurgitated one bit at a time and made over to the female whose bill point protrudes through the narrow vertical slit to receive the food. As he receives the food he utters a note of delight and she looks her

bill caught and held at the tip of the bill and delivered in the same way as before to his wife. The male generally taps at the entrance and waits patiently for the female's consent to be fed. Considerable waits are involved but the tapping continues.

Here arises the often discussed question: Are Hornbills 'carnivorous'? They are more than that; they are omnivorous. They must have insects or ani-



EVER OPEN DOOR Only a few weeks old young Hornbill grotesque hungry and voracious—awaiting the return of its father.

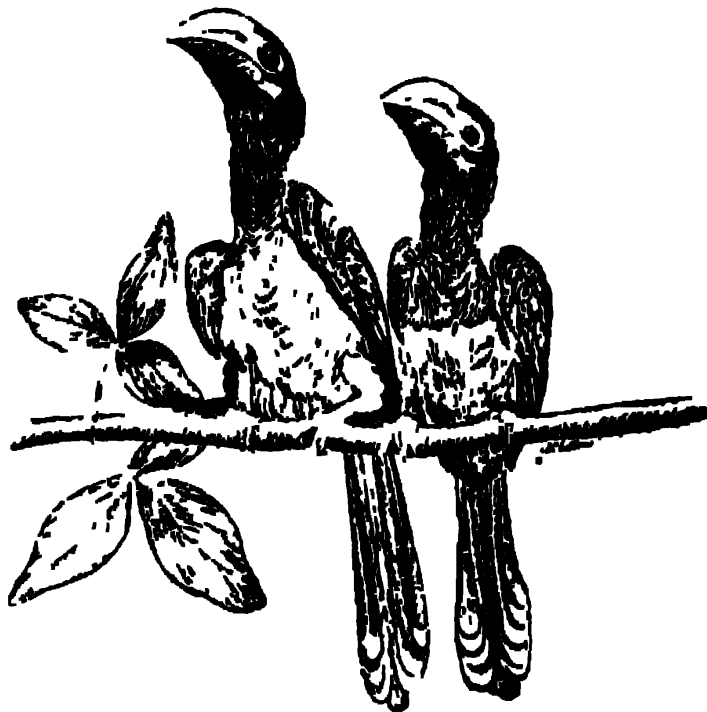
mal food and green leaves, grass-hoppers, beetles, lizard and the like are also the part of their daily diet. It has even been observed of Hornbills catching the nest of such birds as Mergansers and Parakeets and devouring their young. Peepers have no much

appreciated, and any young seedlings.

Hornbills, however, are most particular about cleaning their bills after each feed. This they do by hanging and scraping the bill against the side of a branch repeatedly.

A short time after the young have been hatched the wall is broken down, the female emerges from the prison and the wall is once more built up and plastered. Again only a narrow slit is left and now both the parent birds feed the grotesque hungry and clamorous youngsters.

It has been observed that when the wall of the nest hole is finally broken down for the young birds to fly away, they do not do so immediately. Perhaps owing to temporary unsuitability of monsoonish weather or because of their timidity several days may elapse before the



EXPRESSION OF EXCITEMENT A couple of young Hornbills—fully fledged—come in and startle after emerging from the prison home into the outer new world of beauty.

HORNBILL



"MALABAR PIED HORNBILL" - Female, having white ring round the eye and a black band at the nest hole with titbit

young emerge into the outer new world. During this period, apparently, the female will enter the nest to roost with the family at nights.

The Common Grey Hornbill (female) does not make her way out until the young are about a fortnight old and not infrequently until just before they are ready to leave the nest.

It will be interesting to note that the mother Hornbill when in the nest is most careful with regard

to its situation that she either throws the droppings out or defecates outside the nest. The young too are very sanitary-minded and is immediately

noticed when it makes a mistake through carelessness.

Once the young are away in the outer world, they fly about no more. Together, they go on on the ground, where a common Myiarch-like position of a Common Grey Hornbill's nest hole. The very day the latter young

vacated it. No cleaning or tidying was necessary before it could be occupied. Certainly numerous feathers have invariably remained in the nest, which brings us to a matter of the greatest importance in the life-cycle of the female Hornbill—that moulting of the wing and tail feathers.

Hornbills become extraordinarily tame and affectionate in captivity. Being blessed or cursed with an insatiable appetite, Hornbills in captivity have one fault that they make a great amount of noise by incessant screechings and croakings when hungry. They will toy with anything bright or shiny and for this they are most entertaining pets.

The Bombay Natural History Society had kept a pet Indian Hornbill in its office in Bombay for over twenty-six years. It was a great favourite with the staff and the visitors, and among its many accomplishments was its

habit of throwing up its food and spitting it from its bill. At times it would make a



money dear

dearer still

dearest forever be!



AMARNATH DUTTA

MONEY has a charm of its own. People in all countries have developed a mysterious craving for gold for money for all that brings money. But the tragedy lies in that money today is not what it was yesterday. A renowned economist Moses Abramovitz rightly deplors that we have lost interest in goods that money can buy but now fascinate ourselves in asking for money is dissipation.

THE PROBLEM is a fact that we have lost our good old money of the forties and fifties at the time when we began to feel the pinch most. Inflation has really set in for the growth of national income in non-free terms gives a better blow as against the comparison in real terms. But how and why the process did actually set off?

In the process of economic development planning operations had to be introduced and the latter promised a continuous unfolding of development opportunities in our country. Interesting enough in a largely non-monetised subsistence pattern of agriculture-dominated economy a highly sun-charged inflationary atmosphere develops when monetary impul-

ses are propagated through heavy investment operations. It is necessary to find out whether the inflationary tempo would have a permanent inducement in stimulating or stimulating up the process of development and whether it would cause distortions in the economy.

In the first plan there was no evidence of inflationary pressures. Over the fifteen years running from 1950-51 the general index of wholesale prices (1952-53=100) stood at 111.8. Prices actually declined by 17.6 per cent in the first plan (although the decline was arrested by July 1955). In the Second Plan prices rose by 5 per cent and in the first two years of the Third Plan there is relative price stability for prices actually rose by 2.4 per cent per annum at that time. In the last three years of the Third Plan the rise in prices was of the order of 20 per cent and this phase has continued through 1966-67. A combined study of the Second and Third Plan periods shows a computed rise of 50 per cent in the whole sale price index.

The most important factor lying behind the steady rise in prices in the Second and the Third Plans accounts for a rise in the prices of agricultural products viz. food and industrial raw materials.

Particularly in the Third Plan period the rate of increase in prices was steep and more marked. An exceptionally bad monsoon reduced the index of agricultural production in 1965-66 to the level scored in 1960-61. Even then the figures of agricultural production for 1964-65 record a growth rate of not more than 2.5 per cent per annum as against a set target of 5 per cent annual increase. Industrial production recorded a 39 per cent annual increase against a targeted increase of 70 per cent and the national income for the first four years worked a 45 per cent annual increase against a 65 per cent increase per annum. With a 2.5 per cent annual increase in population there was hardly any increase in per capita income at the end of the plan. Conditions proved so hopeless in the last two years of the Third Plan that a price rise occurred to the extent of 22 per cent per annum at that period alone.

Judged by this singular test of what a unit of money is competent to buy we have severe inflation. In the first plan public investment was of the order of Rs 1,600 crores in the Second Plan it rose to Rs 3,650 crores and in the Third Plan it was Rs 6,300 crores. It is proposed in the Draft Fourth Plan that public sector outlay will

MONEY DEAR—DEARER STILL—DEAREST FOREVER BE!

reach a figure of Rs. 14,798 crores plus a private sector outlay of Rs. 10,000 crores respectively. More important is the a huge share in the rate of rise in Government expenditure. In the last four years of the Third Plan the annual rate of rise in Govt. expenditure is 18.5 per cent, more than twice the rate of 8.7 per cent in the Second Plan. While in the Third Plan net bank credit to Government (Table V) was less than that of the private sector (Table VI) the Government solved the problem of non-availability of financial resources through heavy deficit financing in the form of Public Debt, interest plus additionally the unutilised reserve of the private sector was drawn into the public Government fund.

All this inevitably results in excess demand. Following the Report of the Food and Agriculture Commission (1966) population has been rising at a rate of 2.1 per cent per annum and consequently a rise in income and employment follows. Employment in the public sector increased at an average rate of 6 to 7 per cent a year during the Second and the Third plans. Total income generated comprising wages and salaries recorded a steep rise in the Third Plan. The average annual rate of increase was 1.5 per cent during the Third Plan, compared to 7.7 per cent and 4.8 per cent in the First and Second plans respectively. More important, large part of the income generated has accrued to the labour force sector of the labour force millions whose propensity to consume is naturally high.

As against the stupendous rise in demand the supply position of foodgrains is fairly poor, showing Agricultural production during the first two Plans increased by over 20 per cent but it showed a decline of 7.4 per cent during the Third Plan resulting in a serious gap in supplies. In such a period of

stress and strain a price inflation no doubt ensues and prices of foodgrains and raw materials rise faster than the prices of goods sold by the non agricultural (industrial) sector. Thus the latter has to spend a large proportion of its income for buying agricultural products the demand for which is relatively inelastic. All this is done at the expense of real saving since a maldistribution of income seriously disturbs the savings structure of the economy. The net effect then is a decline in the level of aggregate saving. The money rate of saving no doubt has increased from 6.5 per cent to 9.9 per cent per annum throughout the course of the three Plans. But the content of real saving has declined considerably. And the Government is still not bridging the gap between real saving and investment through creating new money but a state that may soon develop when not enough resources are available to meet the enlarged money demand except at higher prices. In the context of a heavy demand for food production expenditure it is realistic that it is an imperative to substitute over food items for food and then the private contribution to industrialisation is to be sought not so much through the system is through changing their consumption patterns.

Did the inter sectoral price disparity in favour of the agricultural sector do a little more good to the economy. Possibly never so because of the high income elasticity of demands for foodgrains on the part of the newly employed labour force. A new equilibrium could then be conceived on the supply front but here all the avenues are closed because of structural bottlenecks that hinder production possibilities. Again a bird's wing rising supply curve is often the result of high prices. High prices increase the element of hoarding and reduce the extent of marketable surplus. Thus the

negative effects of price elasticity is substantiated by the trend of agricultural production during the entire phase of planning operations in this country.

A developing economy with the inherent structural characteristics of the national income largely being derived from subsistence farming, a relatively limited and undiversified pattern of exports and scarcity of capital resources, technical skills and entrepreneurship is highly vulnerable to inflationary pressures when investment is proportionately much higher than the limited physical resources. In the Second and Third plans however, while aggregate investment rose substantially food output showed a smaller rise in the Second and a veritable decline in the Third Plan. As a result prices of food articles increased by about 39 per cent and 41 per cent in the Second and Third Plans respectively. The important point to observe is that in the initial years of development investment must yield the pattern of output that would broadly correspond to the pattern of effective consumer demand. To ensure that what is required therefore is a balanced development of both agriculture and industry. Otherwise the evils of inflation will take the edge over economic development.

The view that the initial rise in price by stimulating investment and capital formation would promote economic development rests on an oversimplification of the economic mechanism. The very forces which are expected to spark the development process work in the opposite directions. Once the process gets away under the tempo of inflationary financing, there is no knowing where the safe limit can be drawn. While discussing on inflation in the continent of Europe Prof



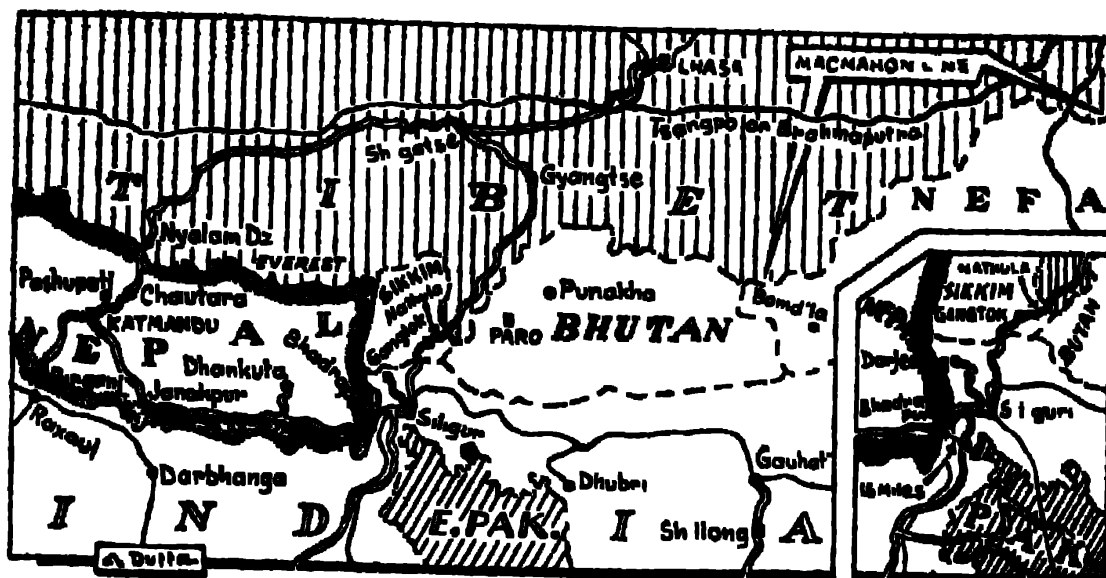
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§ 379 A



DHIRENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA

After 22 years of Independence India after spending Rs 1,000 crores on planning alone and Rs 46,000 crores in annual budgets has one crore population without jobs and 20 crore men, women and children living in squalor and starvation if inefficiency and red tape are endemic in government then the frustrated mass becomes an easy prey to communism. Particularly the students—the most easily combusti-

Small wonder that the Communist Party has a large mass following in India but has found itself incapable of non-alignment between CPSU and CCP. The Chinese Communist Party took direct measures in 1960 to challenge the Soviet domination of the CPI and it started to promote its own views among the sympathetic section of the Indian party.

fore, not very capable of solving Asian problems), and Mao's revolutionary theories chart a road to power not only for the Chinese people but also for the billion folk who live in the colonial countries of South-East Asia." Mao's famous dictum is that "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." It means that the expansion of Chinese communism beyond her borders is possible only through force and only if countries are kept in a state of constant violent upheaval.

Such trash as Gandhism, the Parliamentary Road and the like are opium used by the Indian ruling classes to dope the Indian people. Only by relying on violent revolution and taking the road of armed struggle can India be saved and the Indian people achieve complete liberation.

'OUR UNQUIET FRONTIERS

on" (*Peking Review* No 28 (1967) page 23)

The Secretary of the West Bengal Communist Party, Mr. Promode Das Gupta, in his document "Revisionist Trend in CPI" took the CCP line that the proletariat in all countries must "smash the bourgeois State apparatus" and demanded that the CPI must follow the lead of the Chinese Party. He criticised the Rightist CPI leaders for relying on election rather than "civil war" as the road to power.

But the fact that the Indian communists ignoring the 'power of the gun' have taken the parliamentary road and seized power in two States West Bengal and Kerala has completely flabbergasted the Chinese communists. Having lost in them the supporting base across the border, they bitterly denounced the CPI (M) as "scabs imperialist stooges, servitors of Indian monopolists." They said:

"Hard facts have proved that the so-called non-Congress governments presided over by the revisionists in the Indian Communist Party were out and out lackeys of the big landlord class and the big bourgeoisie murderers of the revolutionary people and flunkies of imperialism. Facts have also proved that the Indian revisionists theory of peaceful transition is a hundred per cent counter-revolutionary fraud." (*Peking Review* No 51 1967 page 26) Disappointed with the CPI (M) on whom they had pinned much hope the Chinese Communist Party has certified a splinter group in India popularly called the Naxalites as a "genuine Marxist-Leninist Party" since it has declared its

faith in the "Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung."

Besides subversive infiltrations, sending of arms and assistance to rebels against the lawful government (China following its policy of 'making use of contradictions and destroying the enemy one by one'), is provoking Pakistan and Nepal against India causing border forays and tensions. One of Mao's sayings is 'injuring all of a man's ten fingers is not as effective as chopping off one'.

PAKISTAN

We cannot minimise the danger represented by Pakistan to the peace and independence of India. Of course, India cannot be overpowered by Pakistani force but the Hindu racial genius is incompatible with the mood of violence. Even whenever there is a just cause for a fight with Pakistan, Indians feel seized with an overflow of affection for their brethren of yesterday. But this myth of gracious "yesterday" was exploded in the agonising Indo-Pakistan War of 1965.

To look back into history, one Rahmat Ali nearly 40 years ago first called for the creation of Pakistan as a state separate from India. The word "PAK" besides standing for 'land of the holy' also represents by its initial names of Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sindh. But later when Md. Ali Jinnah leader of the Muslim League, took up the demands for the partition of the country and the establishment of separate Pakistan and Hindustan (as he wanted India to be named), he left out Afghanistan and Kashmir and included Assam and Bengal.

After partition, well-

armed troops from across the western frontier attacked Kashmir in 1947 and reached Srinagar. They had unobstructed passage through Pakistan. If given the chance the Indian Army would have cleared the whole of Kashmir of them, but India was induced by the then British Governor-General, Lord Mountbatten, to go to the United Nations for relief and redress.

Trouble began Pakistan claimed that Kashmir by right belonged to her (although the ruler had acceded to India) as the majority of its population was Muslims and the partition of India had taken place on a communal basis.

On the principle of the enemy's enemy being a friend Pakistan wants to avail itself of the opportunity of unabashed Chinese hostility to make India hand over the valley of Kashmir to her.

Pakistan seems to be a cat's paw in the hands of Mao whose aim is to test India's military strength and unity if it has to take a second decision to attack India.

The Chinese cannot forget their past history. Whenever a strong government has come to power it has tried to restore the old empire and to extend its influence even further. The Chinese communists who now rule in Peking are no exception. For China Tibet is the "Palm of the Chinese hand" and 'Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and NEFA the five fingers'.

NEPAL

Nepal with 54,000 sq miles, is the largest and the most influential border State between India and

OUR UNQUIET FRONTIERS

Tibet Until 1950, it was a forbidden land where political power was held by the hereditary Rana Prime Ministers. It was in 1950 that the Nepali Congress launched an armed struggle to end the despotic rule of the Ranas. And when the late King Tribhuvan, father of King Mahendra, had to flee Kathmandu to escape arrest by the then Prime Minister Mohan Sumsher, the die was cast. On arriving at New Delhi in an Indian Air Force plane, King Tribhuvan declared himself in favour of democratic rule in Nepal.

It is no longer a secret that Mohan Sumsher also came to India, offered Nepal to be India's protectorate as Nepal was under the British before India's independence.

But Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru backed the King against the Panch rule and restored kingship to its rightful place. But the democracy that came in the wake of the revolution failed to take roots. For eight years, the people of Nepal had to endure corrupt governments punctuated by periods of direct rule by the king. In 1959 the first democratic election was held and the people voted the Nepali Congress to power.

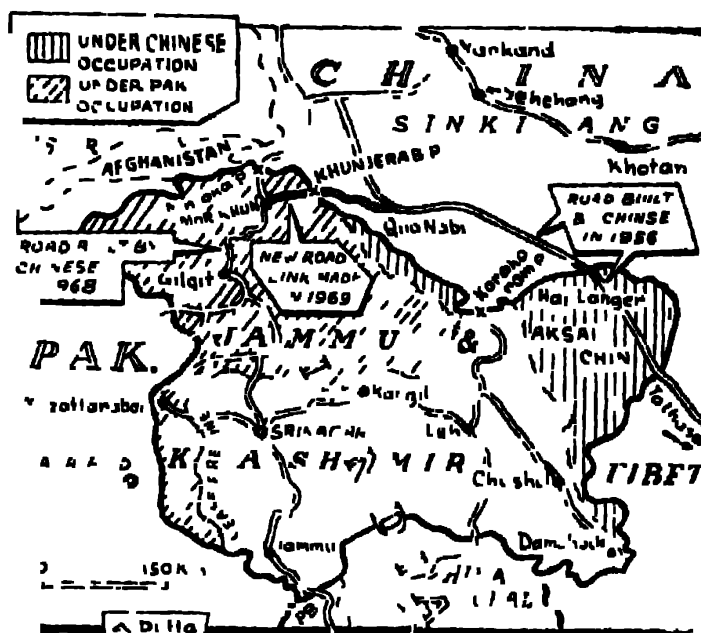
A very large part of Nepal is hills and jungles. According to the 1952 census, Nepal's population stood at 8,431,577. Ninety per cent of the people live on agriculture carried on in a primitive way. Wholesale traffic was almost unknown, there being only 700 miles of passable roads in the entire country, which is twice the size of Great Britain. The percentage of

literacy was not more than five.

The country's total revenue of Rs. 336m a year was hardly enough to meet the annual expenditure. This made it imperative to seek financial assistance from abroad. Financial assistance from India alone constitutes 30 per cent of Nepal's total income from foreign aid. The democratic government of B. P. Koirala

and King Mahendra is tilting the balance of power by throwing India into the vortex of cold war.

The Chinese have been active in building strategic roads not only in Nepal but also in Kashmir, Sinkiang and Tibet. The road between Lhasa and Suining which China built in 1940 across Aksai Chin, the northern bulge of Indian Kashmir, connects Lhasa in Tibet with Kash-



mir in Sinkiang. Another road links Mordhun with Qila Naur across the Khunjerab Pass in Sinkiang. Qila Naur is on the Tiber-Akshig Road. Mordhun is on a road built by the Chinese in 1968 linking Kashmir through the Muzatatabad Pass with Gilgit in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. A road from Gilgit through Muzatatabad just north of the Pakistani capital Rawalpindi provides the main link between Pakistan and Sinkiang.

These strategic roads—built by China—have shrunk the formidable Hindu

And Communist China is now heavily on the way to a Kathmandu-based road link which the exiled Nepali Congress leader in India described as 'Nepal's road to communism'.

China hopes to entice Nepal into its own fold

These strategic roads—built by China—have shrunk the formidable Hindu

OUR UNQUIET FRONTIERS

lavas as a defensive barrier to India's vulnerable plains

China has always regarded the Mongolian people that border on her own or Tibetan frontiers — the Bhutanese, the Sikkimese and the Nepalese — as rightfully belonging to her sphere of influence. Bhutan in particular is considered 'the gate in the south'. Its climate and its comparatively fertile valleys are in many ways ideal for colonization by the Chinese. The British who knew the implication of Bhutan for the safety of India had by a treaty in 1910 taken Bhutanese Foreign Relations under their control in return for an annual subsidy. After Independence in August 1947, the Indian Government entered into a new treaty under the terms of which Bhutan agreed 'to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to its external relations'. In return for an annual subsidy of 500,000 rupees, plus guaranteed transportation rights through India, its only link with the outside world.

BHUTAN

Alarmed by Nepalese flirtation with Peking, the Bhutanese are watching Chinese overtures with cynical eyes.

A treasure house of nature, this 19,000-sq-mile strategic State has a population of about 730,000.

Chinese efforts to exert supremacy over Bhutan are nothing new. History mentions a Chinese attempt in this direction during the days of Emperor Chien Lung of China in 1736. The early history of Bhutan is so much enveloped in myth and legend that little is definitely known. Perhaps it is better to count the advent of saint Padma Sambhava in Bhutan from India, in the 8th century A.D. as the starting point for a reliable history of the country. At that time there were two important rulers in Bhutan — Khizi Khat Thot of Khempaling and Naguchhi.

Naguchhi's eldest son was killed in a battle, which filled the king with grief. It is at this juncture that Padma Sambhava arrived on the scene, he consoled the king.

The subsequent history of Bhutan is largely concerned with the rise and spread of the Dupka Sect founded by the Yeses Dorji between 1160 and 1210 A.D. The present ruler Jigme Dorji Wangchuk is third in the line of succession of the Dupka Sect.

SIKKIM

The State of Sikkim, a protectorate of India, sits astride the historic trade routes where mule trains once crossed the Himalayan passes bound to and from Tibet. Now, however, the bells on the pack

animals are all but stilled, and the vipping cries of the drivers are no more heard since the trade between India and Tibet has been stopped. The Government of India also entered into a fresh treaty on December 5, 1950, under which India not only acquired the full control of Sikkim's external relations but also the right to take such measures as she considered necessary for the defence of Sikkim in return for an annual subsidy of 300,000 rupees.

Sikkim is about one-third the size of Israel and has a population of 1,67,000, three-fourths of whom are of the Nepalese stock. The largest minority is represented by the Lepchas, who are seeking greater status for their group.

The Lepchas are the original inhabitants of Sikkim. In general they live and work on private estates owned either by the Sikkim Royal Family or by the Buddhist monasteries in which the Himalayas abound.

Though the majority of the Sikkimese population are Hindus, Buddhism is the State religion. The impact of Buddhism on Sikkim has been attributed to the Tibetan monk Lhatsen Chembu and his two disciples, Sempa Chembu and Rinzin Chembu.

Lhatsen Chembu and his disciples, unable to bear the persecution in Tibet, migrated to Yaksum, a remote Sikkimese village situated in Sikkim's north-western region. In fact the civilisation of Sikkim started from this unknown village of Yaksum — the last inhabited place towards Kanchenjunga — meaning "the meeting

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place of three monks" The three monks brought with them a rich reservoir of Tibetan culture and tradition.

Legend links Sikkim's ruling family with Khebumsek, a Tibetan warlord from Mynak in East Tibet. The descent of Khebumsek can originally be traced back to the Indian King Indrabadhu who reigned in what is known today as the Himachal Pradesh in western Himalayas. Towards the end of the ninth century, a descendant of King Indrabadhu is known to have founded the Myanik kingdom in the Khumi area of Tibet.

The present ruler of Sikkim, the youthful Chogyal (the righteous ruler) Palden Thondup Namgyal the 12th ruler of the Namgyal dynasty, was enthroned on April 1, 1960 at the Potal Monastery of Lhaklakhum. The Sikkimese King, educated at Darjeeling and Simla, married to an American girl from New York, Mrs. Hope Coolidge Gyalshe Namgyal.

All the world wondered when a foreigner became the queen of Sikkim. The custom of an ancient Royal family going back to 500 years was violated. But the Lashi Ardy (Council of Lamas and Laymen) signified its assent to the wedding. The Maharaja's first wife was from a Tibetan noble family, who died in August 1950 leaving behind her two sons.

LADAKH

Chinese incursions into India's northern frontier area had the focus of world attention on Ladakh. About the size of Ireland, it consists of lofty mountains

whose peaks are 15,000 to 25,000 feet above sea level.

Of its population of 81,000, nearly all live in the valleys at an elevation of between 10,000 and 15,000 feet. It is a land of Gompas or monasteries and each village has its own gumpa, outside which the monks place prayer wheels which the devotees spin with the prayer OM MANI PADME HUM, or the jewel is in the lotus. The largest monastery is the Hemis Gumpa. Ladakh itself has long been a theocracy with the priests themselves exercising for all practical purposes authority over the people. But now democracy has been introduced in the remote mountain region.

ASSAM & NEFA

With an area of 8,000 sq. miles, the North East Frontier Agency and Assam lie on the extreme north-east corner of India, connected with the Indian mainland only by a corridor. The territory is completely cut off from the rest of India for 200 miles. Assam is bordered by Tibet and Bhutan in the north, by Burma in the east and by Pakistan in the south and the west.

Throughout its history, Assam has been subjected to a number of invasions from the north and the east. A steady trickle of tribes from western China to the Himalayan valleys is known to have taken place since time immemorial. Until the British took over in the last century, Assam was ruled for 700 years by a dynasty of such migrant Mongoloid kings as the Ahoms.

The hills hold tens of thousands of semi-civilised,

ferce tribesmen who belong to hundreds of different tribes, many still unidentified and inaccessible. The racial picture is bewildering here diverse strains of Austro-Asians, Dravidians, Mongoloids and Aryans are mingled. The dominant streak appears to be Mongoloid. The area has a reputation for tribal restlessness, inter-tribe warfare and uprisings.

The Nagas inhabit the mountainous border land between the Brahmaputra valley of Assam and upper Burma. The area is about half the size of Belgium and in it live some thirty Naga tribes, comprising about 15,000 people. They have been in armed revolt against Indian authority and are being helped by China and Pakistan.

For China to cut off Assam's narrow corridor of 16 miles with the rest of India would be a quick and easy step. In view of the precarious state of Indo-Pakistan relation, it does not seem unlikely that such a complete encirclement of Assam is in Mao's mind.

While Chinese intentions regarding these States are no longer in doubt, the local population is very much alert partly because the Chinese invasion of India has shocked them, and partly because the overwhelming majority of the Sikkimese and Bhutaneese are Lamaist Buddhists and the fate of the Dalai Lama, head of the Lamaist Church, has been a warning.

But these countries are sitting on the edge of history.

Is there a generation gap?

'T HERE has perhaps never been and never will be such a gap between generation as there is today between my sons' generation and my own,' remarked the father of a college student in Delhi. His pessimism is undoubtedly shared by hundreds of parents in urban India who feel that they do not understand their children any more. But is the rub of the discotheque—mod clothes in vivid colours, a rare puff at a high leg, and hip action the expressions of a yawning generation gap? Or is it these mere ripples on the surface of a much deeper pool? A generation gap is not only widening the front door of the *Joint* shut—if it changes in values and a short way from existing socially determined goals.

For the large majority of urban elite youths who horrify their parents with talk of communism and dedication and contemplate life amidst a miasma of smoke, tins and black coffee, the future is already prepared. A background of schooling in a pretentious convent or public school, a degree from a snob college, and then a job in an exclusive business house, the I.A.S., I.F.S., or the Armed

For the conventional clothes and a hectic social life are only forms of protest against a life into which they will inevitably drift. The college girl who peers at life through a narrow mod sunglasse and whizzes about the campus on her beat motor cycle is often notaverse after graduation to the subtle nuances of a modern arranged marriage. Her intro-

duce or live in *burlesque*, and work in the highly competitive fields of journalism, architecture, and advertising. They enjoy the independence of living on their own and not having to account to someone for everything I do or wherever I go." Marriage is not seen as a pressing social need but as a relationship which grows out of the mutual understanding between two people.

One of the reasons why there is more heard about the generation gap today is because the younger generation is far less inhibited than it has ever been before and vocalises its discontent against the older generation much more than the college student and not only those from the more elitist colleges feel that with increasing educational opportunities, the age at which children are expected to be married must be more flexible. The traditional view of the parental generation that there is an age by which boys and girls from respectable homes must be married, and that an over-educated 'laughter' may prove a liability in the marriage market, are views which many young people feel will just not do for them any more.

For the young village

MALAVIKA CHANDA

and job from the conventional social status, caste in mind—and arranged love is not far away.

Marriage and choice of profession are two main spheres of intergenerational conflict, and in recent years the number of rebels in the higher echelons of middle class society have increased. Inter-caste and inter-community marriages based on a conscious choice by both partners are more common and protest is carried beyond the discotheque into the sphere of employment. Young men tend to think more about the job they want and not what their parents would like them to be. Working girls share

IS THERE A GENERATION GAP?

boy who goes to college in a nearby town, or goes in search of a job to cities, the contrast between rural values and those of urban India—the cinema, tight trousers and the nuclear family—often come as a culture shock. He is often subjected to the cross pressures of two traditions, but even this is not a generation gap. Undoubtedly, he may become less caste-conscious whilst at his place of work, and wear trousers instead of a dhoti but when back at the village, his life follows the old routine. He ultimately marries a girl picked for him by his family, whom he leaves behind in his paternal joint family when he returns to his job in the city.

All this is not to deny that at all levels of Indian society there is a dichotomy between the values of the two generations; nor is this a totally new phenomenon as different age groups always look at situations differently. But does this constitute a generation gap—a revolutionary change in social thinking resulting in the adoption of a new set of values? A striking example of how conservative Indian society basically is, is reflected in the attitude towards the newly emergent group of the middle class working woman.

The socio-economic group of the office assistant, shopowner, small businessman and those in 'Government service' is producing those with the potential of changing social values—the middle class working woman. But, the whirlwind which has taken women into offices, schools, colleges and factories is not a whirlwind of true

emancipation, but merely the cost of living. A recent survey conducted by the Indian Institute of Public Opinion of 500 middle class working women in the three major Indian cities showed that for 50% of the sample, the most important reason for working was to supplement the family income. Significantly for those with incomes above Rs 1000/- the motivation was other than financial; they worked either because of an intrinsic interest in their jobs or because they wanted to keep themselves busy. Such women were a small fraction of the sample which was dominated by those in the income group of Rs 150 to Rs 600.

Many middle class women are the first women in their families who have ever taken up paid employment. In fact, if statistics are a guide to the degree of a country's modernisation, then India, with her increasing numbers of urban working women is well on her way to social progress. But figures are not the whole story. Progress, as the reverse of the status quo, must involve a rationalisation of values. A working woman is truly emancipated only when she is able to question and to some measure, to resist, the diverse and often un-
in social pressures against women.

The revolutionary change in the middle class woman's economic position is rarely matched by a corresponding change in her social role. Though the average middle class family is tolerant, or is forced to be tolerant, because of econo-

mic factors, or its women-folk working, the overall attitude towards women remains paternalistic. Despite the woman being a co-sharer in the role of bread-winner, decision-making is an almost exclusively male sphere. As for the woman, her feeling of emotional dependence still persists. Her life is lived at two levels and influenced by two contrary value systems at work, she is in a position of equality or superiority with her male subordinates but at home she is governed by inhibiting social conventions. The clerk in one of Delhi's offices who felt that she must consult her husband before expressing her views on matters as impersonal as politics and social customs, is not an exceptional case.

It is not only society which is reluctant to give women a role in keeping with their enhanced economic status—amongst the women too there is very little desire to protest. Their choice of jobs is influenced by notions of respectability, and what their families would like them to be doing. A first class graduate from one of Delhi's leading colleges entered the IAS 'because my father was very keen that I should join' and continued in her job, though she found it dull. The IIPSO survey referred to above showed that almost 50% of the women (including those in professions other than teaching) felt that teaching is the most suitable profession for women. And, as a survey sponsored by the Education Commission shows, teaching is one of few socially approved profes-

IS THERE A GENERATION GAP?

gions for women. A teacher who had been teaching for over twelve years, explained why, at thirty-five she was still unmarried. "With my education and qualifications, it was not easy for my people to find a suitable match." Yet, she finally married a man whom she had met only once, in the presence of relatives, and had never thought of choosing her own life partner.

For the average middle class man too, the choice of a job is limited to the sphere of approval by the older generation. Often, a job is found on the basis of contact and one's family connections and background. Here, the younger generation accept the methods of the older generation as it is to their benefit, though the methods used operate on an almost feudal basis, quite

opposed to the values of the modern world which emphasise merit and qualifications criteria. In marriage too, it is not unusual to find a man, who after winning a scholarship, or being employed abroad returns home on a lightning visit to marry the girl his parents have chosen for him perhaps through a matrimonial advertisement in the newspapers.

Middle class society all over the world is the class of assenters, concerned with social niceties and small hypocrisies. Hence, the 'hep' girl who will not smoke in the presence of her family because her parents feel that older relatives may get to know about their daughter's habits, or because they disapprove as they feel it is not done for a girl to smoke. Ultimately, many of those who want to be different give way to the pressures of a status seeking society, where, a job in an exclusive firm or marriage to an up and coming executive, is infinitely preferable to the sheer discomfort of being a rebel all one's life. Amongst the solid middle class where today women are challenging men on their grounds, initiative for social change is lost amidst a morass of conventionality. The younger generation is basically conservative—for the more sophisticated, conservatism is layered over by a veneer of psychedelia, and talking about the generation gap. To those who wait long hours in bus queues, or trudge to office, talk of a generation gap is incomprehensible.

VISIT
Gujarat



THE Towns of Vadgaon, Madhav Nihal at Bhilgaon, Shabhar, Akarnavati and other places in the Royal Domain of Ahmedabad, Jain Temples on Gernar and Shetruddi Hills, Mahatma Ghandhi Temple at Varanasi, Jain Temple at Madhura prehistoric excavations at Lothal, An Sula at Gamdhy and Ashokapur, Rajasthali Sultany and Fertilizer Sultany near Bikaner, Armed Baily at Ahmed and the flag of tower, the Gila Nila, are but a few of the places of interest and centers of tourist interest. A visit to these places is undoubtedly a treat to the eyes.

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But the cold workers are die-hard up to be pre-entire to the Shahenshah

Persian Preliminaries

SHIBDAS BANERJI

WHICH stranger? With these two kindly English words the owner of the charkhna (tea-shop) had welcomed us. We have already spent some days here in Zohud, and making advance of reaching Tehran. No long tourist office here to come here, eye-catching advertisements to direct me.

Far away from my noise of traffic. In my degree I sweltering her everyone who is anyone is wearing woollen dinner suits tailored in America. Amidst these folks I am perhaps the only one in cottons. Am in shirt sleeves. Time later afternoon.

•The chaikhana is a cosy place. People come here not only for

but gossip mostly in leisure vacation.

'Infrequented but not faded Zohud is merely a few miles away from what was my boyhood's India. Where is we are reputed for next country in which such as Algeria is as described in French thriller. Zohud is known to be almost a new town with windows now open desert.

Merchants and merchandises, caravans and camel flows and fruits, fairs and faked d-shies, hot day and cool night.

We asked for her bow to find a see helping of wobbles. We are no hurry for meeting. This morning I still had the mind to go to Tehran via Meshed in the north east, close to Russian border to

my boyhood dream Bokhara. But we scrapped the plan out, thinking, why should we be a slave to my preconceived plan at all. Hadn't we time enough to dabble as we please? Went out for a life experiencing.

Once in the bounds of the Indian subcontinent I am feeling a bit of a bunch of my usual habits are also clamouring for vacation. This morning while I was considering the request from these usual habits I was taken by surprise. I, a newspaper worshipper, had not touched any newspaper or magazine for weeks. My newspaper obsession was I found loosened. Weir some of the other urban habits so preciously preserved by me for years.

Stranger still this morning I

PERSIAN PRELIMINARIES

had found myself neither bound by my wristwatch, nor rebuked by my calendar.

Why not? I had asked myself before leaving the bed, let your spirit wander its own free dom. It's a new sky. Here's your life's chance.

The very thought of it this morning enlarged by the total value of the desert fringed town's otherworldliness had an electric effect on us as if someone we most intimately knew had walked out of our being and stayed put in our bed which we had already left to stand at the window and gaze through the lonely desert beyond. This is the desert through which his tory had galloped into India.

I had looked hard into the grey emptiness. This was part of India almost a continent within a country. Beyond Lay Shuij Ispahan, Isfahan, Tabriz the mouth is scorching June but given autumn in my heart. In my own mother tongue, the language of poet Tagore, autumn means harvest season, *Sarat*. It's the best of all seasons where, since the benevolent British rule food is scarce and have always to be imported. Isfahan via Meshed is the usual route for travellers. I had looked back on the bed. The fellow who had walked out of me was still visible there a symbol of urban civilization, living on the fabricated surface of things a world of created collective illusions. This urban fellow for a little over a decade except sporadically could never muster enough courage to become himself could never think something that others were not thinking could never be stupid enough doing things that others were already not doing could never read a poem that others had not already read could never read a book that men everywhere were not reading he hadn't gone anywhere where others already had not gone. He had only been rushing about to wait for buses instead of walking missing there

by all the wonderful unknown things for lack of time. His craze for self-deception was infinite. It was always time for him to keep time, to engagements, time to work out for a living, time to go to bridge, time to sleep, to wake up, to live a life of compartments. Always a lack of real leisure. Everyday to be in time rain or shine to keep up with the Johnses, paying insurance premiums, buying touchables, seeable, showable objects called possessions, working himself round the clock for future security, he'd kept himself safe in the locker. Not knowing that the best of things of life are free he was never free. And in the mean while he could have securely died, assured in the hope there would be a six-line obituary in the morning newspaper having read that obituary his next-door neighbour, who one day had borrowed a cup of sugar from the deceased would never again bother to remember him.

So it last this morning I had looked away from this factory-made fellow. Once again I had looked out into the sunlit space. No I had thought to myself I would not take the

the typical bus route to Meshed in order to catch the comfortable train to Isfahan.

But I be a nobody and go anywhere without any special reason.

Now in this charkhana as if personally involved in the lives of the people we sipped our tea and watched the people out on the open street of Zahedan.

Not many women in the street. No veils. Straight and frank gazes, like opened up roses. Rosy also is their skin. Eyes big and blue. Cloud-coloured hair on head. Looking at those pretty things the Persian saying comes to our mind while travelling the road is a better place than the inn.

We paid up for the tea and hookkah and were about to leave when a darbesh approached us.

He said, "*Salam, zaban e farsi ra misanimid?*"—Good afternoon, do you understand Persian language?

A wispy desert-gale of a man, left leg shorter than the right. One eye glassy, other one sharp. To him I said, "*Salam, Kam i farsi balad am*" Which means, I know but little Persian.

The Darbesh gravely complimented us saying that we spoke *Khabli Khab*, very good.

Now that was downright flattery. But well meant. We knew too well our Persian was verbless. Most Persian nouns being jolly good current coins in northern India our guess was we would any time pass on with our tolerably good broken Persian. After all Persian has been the language of aristocracy and bureaucracy in northern India until John Bull had given us his Bible.

Now once again squatting down on the Shirazi carpet we ordered for two bowles of milk-lass. Another round of *hookkah* was automatically thrown in. If you already don't know I might as well tell you *hookkah* is the Persian and Indian for hubble bubble. We asked the Darbesh about the caravan route to Kerman on way to Isfahan. In reply he gravely quoted an unnamed Persian saint poet and added without the slightest pity, 'Allah will love you for this safa'. Never mind if the desert swallows you.

Death? Caravan?"

May Allah blacken my face if I've not told you the truth of truths."

That fixed our immediate programme. We gave him a handful of coins in truly Caliphate fashion. Without bowing he said 'Gloiy be to Allah'. This sounded him as if he had said—your money is deposited in God's bank, from where undoubtedly you'll get it back with compound interest.

To celebrate the compound interest another round of tea and

PERSIAN PRELIMINARIES

hookah A decision was confirmed

Quite a crowd in chaikhana
Softspoken people And of my
height But brighter in complexion
Unnamed the ends of their
ancestors have gone to India for
generations and generations
Our blood is common
is of rivers flowing into the
same sea Much of our culture
is likewise common so is our
ancientness Persia or Iran
has never been a strange a name
to us Indians Whether Iran
comes from the word Aryan or
not from the birth of Darwin's
monkey History has lumped our
these two peoples in the same
oversize cradle Ever since Lord
God said it is no good that it
should be left alone and the
now famous Garden of Eden
since the intercourse between
India and Iran has been's
between men and women spiri-
tually and worldly

At least this has been so until
Lord Clive overruled Lord God
and England so very kindly took
upon herself the heavy burden
of civilizing us anew They
had truly a great mission to
carry through naturally the
time never bothered them only
the score At that hurriedly
a India and Iran left the
cradle and suddenly becoming
adults started walking in dif-
ferent direction like divorced
partners the sooner forgotten
the better for peace of soul The
Clive Street of Calcutta having
become our new home of eco-
nomic scriptures in the
of Wall Street the Khyber and
Bolan Passes begin to be men-
tioned as of our primitive Aids
without any modern conse-
quences Those of us in ship
began to wear flannel to cross
the Channel What still re-
mained in Persia was only in
children's storybooks and Eng-
lish translations of Omar Khayyam
and Hafiz suitably diluted
with dream gulls of a
here Occasionally these verses
brought nostalgic feelings

• But to learn their proper rec-



*The storybook Iran has not a Arabian lamp For magic
carpet is no longer fabulous*

tion Europe was more than
enough To us Europe was
synonym of the United King-
dom Or just plain the UK
was okay The rose of Shiraz
the dunes of Damascus the
minarets of Istanbul the alle-
ways of Aleppo the sons from
the battlements of Lams and Euphrates
breezy and from cool
Azerbaijan and Samarkand in
hired dreams were in their
polluted and decayed phosporous
cease In their place to be
once gone to the Uffizi in
Museum of Athens called
in the but could not
recognize it I believe I
have returned there from visit

after us rather become happily
the true Valhalla of our civiliza-
tion Into the 19th most modern
period of the newly acquired
culture I was born In my 20s
England released us as we had
come to age Within ten years
the Lord of Jivdahal Nehru
was on the trip of the atom
frightened cold no more

jets
owners of it as we Indians
are now in all over the
old paradigm of righteous
and moral superiority To
a Indian and Pakistani new-
spapers have still reporters in
London and Paris Washington
and Moscow but uncharacteristically
none in Tehran Because in our

PERSIAN PRELIMINARIES

pattern of postscript Iran is in consequential. We naturally are delighted to go only where there is smell of money, or where the gold digging know-hows are easily available. The storybook Iran has lost its Aladdin's lamp. We in India now surely can't be easily fooled as of the past. We know in spite of the heavy sky of Iran her magic carpet is no longer flyable. The modern Indian knows his Iran without ever stepping into Iran. If a male could know a girl casually without touching her this knowing is like knowing her.

While I was thus musing the Darbesh with one ear blurred

than the other had left. Another Darbesh was sitting by my side. A true man who has taken life on its own terms. Out on the street it was lighting time.

On the gravelled roadway a swarm of warm-blooded children are playing with a young kid donkey. A blind pottery seller is hawking earthen pitchers. A grand old man with flaming red beard is peddling secondhand winter clothes. Opposite the chukham a make-shift flower shop. The shop is lighted with kerosene lamp reflecting a rainbow on the gutter.

Two playing girls. The even-

ing strollers are carefree and relaxed.

We paid up and stepped on the now cool street, feeling crazy and light-hearted as if in the inside of me someone had become a kid wanting to be in a toy land.

I said to myself: Surrender to temptation before temptation leaves you.

Though that has been many men's ambition before as well I felt all the better surrendering indeed to temptation. Life is wonderful. To speak to her to see they are such a miracle. It is something too grand to be justified or explained.



ABFLECTION

Photo MANAS RANJAN KUNDU CHOWDHURY



IN FESTIVE MOOD

Photo Atul Dey

Democracy and Cultural Life in Early Bengal

ANCIENT Bengal was from the earliest times included in the *Pundra* country. Ancient Indian Sanskrit literature—the *Aitareya Brahmana*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* stretch back its antiquity to a very remote period. The country was also known as *Pundra-Vardhana-Bhukti*, which embraced Gauda and Varendra Mandala. It included portion of Rashasi, Malu, Dinajpur, Bogra and some parts of the Rangpur district. *Bhukti* in those days was the largest territorial division roughly corresponding to a modern province which contained 'Mandalas', 'Vishaya', 'Pithis' and 'Gramas' or villages.

Old Gauda was intimately connected from the earliest ages with Mithila, Magadha, Utkal or Kalinga on the West and South-West, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhotan on the North and the Kingdom of Kamrup beyond the Karotoya on the East. By land as well as by sea it was in touch with various foreign countries.

Relics of ancient civilisation have come to be discovered and recognised.

Of late (1963) the vestiges explored in the valley of the river Ajay and Kumon conducted by the Directorate of Archaeology of West Bengal have disclosed the existence of proto-historic mounds particularly in *Pandua-Ram Dhubi*, the evidences of material culture. The ruins

KSHITIS CH SARKAR

prove the development of civilisation in chalcolithic time at the frontier of Burdwan and Bahubhum districts. The relics will help that there were trace of story behind the rise of civilisation in the 2nd millennium B.C. which seems to have extended eastern banks of the Ganga and Brahmaputra. The proto-historic mounds on the bank of the *Aja Jaydeb-Kenduli* show the traits of the civilisation indicative of proto-historic pottery. It may suggest in importance as a port in the

2nd millennium B.C. revealing the vestiges of the civilisation concerned which was maritime in nature. The excavated antiquities from *Pandua-Ram Dhubi* the steatite seal with hieroglyphs and engraved scripts on pottery identifiable as Minoan with the vases resemble flower vase. Similar proto-historic terracottas also were recovered from the neighbouring site of *Hariyandi* on the Ganga along with meolithic cult by the Asutosh Museum of the Calcutta University.

In the early historic Bengal the discoveries of the *Brahmi* script (Asoka) the terracotta figurines of the Sunga period, the punch marked coins in the Varendra Mandala (Central North Bengal) afford a glimpse of the condition and culture from before the Christian Era.

Here we proposed now a few instances only of vestiges of the cultural life in medieval Bengal at the time of the Imperial Guptas in the fifth century A.D. the Palas in the 9th-11th A.D. and the late medieval

First ruler in the sixteenth century A.D.

The people of the Land had knowledge of the sound administrative system of Government as appears from series of copper plates from Damodarpur, Dhanadaha Vaidygram Kalakumari etc in the North Central Bengal Significantly the 5 Damodarpur copper plates from Dist Dinajpur prominently indicate that this country was then under the settled Government of the Imperial Gupta under a Governor and the local administration was carried on aided by a council representing various interests of the people. The inscriptions record the official head of the Government being the 'Samrat' or the Governor who appointed a person in charge of the administration. The latter was assisted by the 'Naqasreshtha' or the president of the Town guilds—presumably like the 'Sheriff' or the Municipal Chairman or Mayor. *Scythia-sala* (the merchant), *Pramatha-kulika* or the premier noble man (landholder), *Pramatha-Kirttha* (Chief Registrar). The records and papers were in charge of one officer known as 'Pustanala' (Record-keeper). It appears that the administration in those days relating to the Court of Law and Administration had to be presided over by the chiefs of different corporations of merchants and artisans.

After the death of Hushayardhana India became a prey to anarchy. For nearly three centuries there was hiatus or gap in the political arena and the country lapsed into a chaotic condition—

'Matsyanyu' or anarchy. In the 8th century A.D. again, in order to put an end to anarchy (*Matsyanyu*), one Gopal was elected king by the people (Khalimpur inscription from Malda) indicating the vestige of democratic ideas on an elective basis which led to the establishment of the Pal Empire lasting for about a hundred years or so. The Pal again various odds built up a empire embracing a greater part of North India and during that regime the genius of Bengal blossomed forth in various directions.

Besides the advancement of a political outlook the martial spirit of the early people of this land appears from literary accounts. It has given tribute to the valor of their people.

Killima the author in his celebrated '*Rajatarangini*' the history of Kashmir, has described the military prowess and valor of the people of 'Gauda'. He describes a king of Kashmir invited the king of Gauda to his capital and had him killed by his assassins though he had made the image of Vishnu Prithasa Kestava a surty for the sake of his to do good. The people of Gauda (Gaudians) bent on revenge went to Kashmir, the prince of visiting the shrine of Sunda over turned the silver statue of Vishnu Prithasamin making it for that of Prithasa Kestava. Killima though a Kashmiri has given a well-deserved tribute to the

devotion of this band of the Gaudian soldiers constituting the people in early Bengal.

Apart from the achievement of a political outlook,

sound administrative system of Government and the martial spirit of the ancient people of this land, they developed an indigenous distinct school of art, sculpture and painting. They are said to have been established by one Dhiman and his son Bitpal in Varendia (North Central Bengal) and Magadha (Bihar). The account of historian Lama Taranath of Tibet was based no doubt on tradition but the results of subsequent explorations have laid bare the existence of an Artists Guild (*Silpa-Gosthi*) in Varendia vouchsafed for an inscription—(inscription of king Anaya Sena discovered from Depara a few miles from the Rajshahi town) mentions the artist Ranaka Sulapani as the chief jewel of the artists of Varendia styled—

—*Silpa-Gosthi Chandra-pani*. Along with it the poet Sandhyakara Nandi in his '*Ramachandana*' record the superiority of the art of Varendia over the South of 196 A.D. 24 A.R.S. Edition. "In its translation he has proclaimed that the art of Varendia in North Central Bengal has actually put into shade the well known art (different from the other parts of India)—of the 'Kuntala' country (representing the Andhra region) bedimmed the splendour of the *Lata* before which Anga was bowing low by which the artful glances of 'Karnata' were turned down and by which the thinness or slenderness of 'Madhyadesa' was mentioned." The existence of a distinct school of art attributed to the genius of two inhabitants of medieval Varendia is not based merely on literary evidence but rests also on the

DEMOCRACY AND CULTURAL LIFE IN EARLY BENGAL

fine aesthetic qualities of many interesting relic collected by the Varendra Research Society and now deposited in its Museum at Rajshahi and other museums—in the Malda Museum, particularly, in the Asutosh Museum (Calcutta University) likely to be followed by further discussion of the topic by the writer's book—“The Descriptive Sculptures of Gaudian Art” (in the Press)

The influence of this art of Nepal Indo-China now (Vietnam), Island of the Asiatic Archipelagoes and indirectly upon other countries may yet be traced. The ground plan and the typical architecture disclosed in the excavations at Paharpur in the Rajshahi District (East Pakistan) bear striking resemblances to that of the many of the famous temples at Java, particularly that of Borobudur and the temple at Pagan in Burma. The plastic tradition of the sculpture appears to have extended to the further Indian countries along with Mahayana Buddhism. Besides the distinctive style in sculptural specimen of the people, Literary activity also possessed special characteristics developing an individual literary style and the latter earned a special name which is known as the ‘Gaudi Riti’ or Gaudian style as distinguished from the *Vaidarbha* and *Panchala* styles in classical Sanskrit literature. The inscriptional texts and the contributions made by Medieval Poet—Dheryl, Jaydeva, Umapati-dhara, Sandhyakar Nandi, Saran and others occupy a distinctive place in classical Sanskrit Literature.

Next, a remarkable Sans-

krit inscription was used as a vehicle of expression even down to the Muslim rule in this part of Bengal—according to the construction of a bridge in Saka 1455 to 1533 AD by a Muslim official during the regime of Ghazna Suddin Mahmud Shah in Proto Bengali script. The stone inscription is now preserved in the Museum of the Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi. Cf. Dhurail inscription discovered in Dinajpur district.

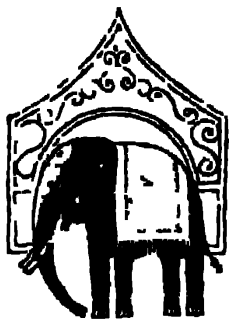
The names of person mentioned in it, are prefixed with श्री and record the construction of a bridge by a minister of the king *Manumadadhipati* Pharas Khin (Faris Khin) son of Narayan Khan (Narayan Khin) in Saka era 1455 corresponding to 1533 AD. It is the earliest known inscription of the last of the independent Sultans of Bengal Ghavathud din Mahmud Shah (1519-38). During the long period of Muslim rule in Bengal no other Sanskrit inscription perhaps seem to have borne the names of Muslim ruler.

The existence of the site of Jagaddal Mahavihar, a university site and the stupendous Paharpur Monund (Somapura Mahavihar) excavated and other educational centres are the standing monumental references to the literary genius of this cultural people of early Bengal. The colophon to the *Hori Chapter* *Kavya* of Chaitanyadev mentions that the Varendra Brahmins of the time of Dharmapala is noted as experts in *Sutra Smriti Purana, Upanishad and Kavya*. The Brahmins and the Kayasthas of this part of Bengal played an important role in the

building up of the cultural life of the people in medieval Bengal.

A Javanese text composed in 1365 AD includes Gauda in a list of countries whose people came to the Japanese capital—increasing in large numbers. They came in ships with merchants. Monks and distinguished Brahmins also came from these lands and were entertained” (Dr. R. C. Majumdar—*Suvarnadwipa* I 136). An inscription from Java mentions ‘*Gauda-dipa-guru*’ indicating thereby that the preceptor of the Sailendra emperor of Java was an inhabitant of Gauda. This royal preceptor installed an image of Manjusri in the year 722 AD. It is also found that king Balaputradewa of the Sailendra dynasty ruling in Java Sumatra and Malaya peninsula sent an ambassador to king Devapala (810-950 AD) to grant five villages for the maintenance of a monastery built by the Sailendra king at Nalanda (Magadha) the intercommunication between the two kingdoms—the Pala and Sailendra might have exercised an influence of the Pala art of Bengal upon that of Java. As a further evidence of the close contact between Java and Bengal, reference may be made to the affinity between the scripts used on certain Javanese sculptures and the Proto Bengali alphabet. The contact continued till at least the 14th century AD (History of Bengal Vol. I).

A detailed survey relating to the contribution of the Bengalis and, for the matter of that, of the cultural people of Gauda is hardly possible within this short compass.

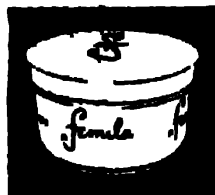


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BOROLINE
HOUSE,
CALCUTTA-3.

BUS STOP, PIPAL NAGAR

RUSKIN BOND

Some of the moving forces of our lives are meant to touch us briefly and go their way

My balcony was my window on the world

The room itself had only one window—a square hole in the wall crossed by two iron bars. The view from it was rather restricted. If I craned my neck sideways and put my nose at the bars I could see the end of the building. Below my room was a narrow courtyard where children were usually at play.

Across the courtyard on a level with my room were three separate rooms, each window barred in the same way. During the day it was difficult to see into these rooms. The harsh cruel sunlight filled the courtyard making the windows patches of darkness.

My room was very small. I had pined about in it so often that I knew its exact dimensions. The floor from heel to toe was eleven inches long. That made the room

not over fifteen feet in length for when I measured the room my toes turned up against the wall. It wasn't more than eight feet broad which meant that two people were the most I could accommodate. I was the only tenant, but at times I huddled up at least three faces so that on the floor two people could lie down.

The patches of the walls and their various stains and patches which were difficult to hide. I covered them up with

pictures from magazines. We needed an Indian actress, such as a study of a blotched out one by a witch and the latest Mr. Universe displayed his enormous muscles from the opposite wall. The biggest stain was almost concealed by a calendar which showed Ganesh.

Elephant-headed god whose blessings were vital to all good beginnings.

My personal belongings were few. A belt on the wall



BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

supported an untidy pile of paperbacks, and a small table in one corner of the room supported the solid weight of my rejected manuscripts and an ancient typewriter which I had obtained on hire.

I was eighteen years old, and a writer.

Such a combination would be disastrous enough in most countries. In India it was doubly so, for there were not many papers to write for and payments were small. In addition, I was very inexperienced and though most of what I wrote came from the heart, only a fraction of it touched the hearts of editors.

Nevertheless I persisted and was able to earn about a hundred rupees a month, barely enough to keep body and soul and typewriter together. But there wasn't much else I could do. Being without the passport to a job, a University degree, I had no alternative but to accept the classification of 'self-employed' which was most impressive, as it included doctors, lawyers, property dealers and grain merchants, most of whom earned well over a thousand a month.

Have you realized that India is bursting with young people trying to pass exams? asked a journalist friend. It's a desperate matter, this race for academic qualification. Everyone wants to pass his exam the easy way, without reading too many books or attending more than half a dozen lectures. That's where a smart fellow like you comes in. Why should students wade through five volumes of political history when they can buy a few model answer papers at my bookstall? They are very helpful, these guess papers. You can write them quickly and flood the market. They'll sell like hot cakes!

Who buys hot cakes?

'Well, then, hot chapatties.'

I'll think about it, I said,

but the idea repelled me. If I was going to misguide poor students I would rather do it by writing second-rate detective stories than by providing them with ready-made Answer Papers. And besides I thought it would be very boring.

II

The string of my cot pecked tight and tight. The dip in the middle of the bed was so bad that I usually woke up in the morning with a stiff back. But it was hopeless at night.



and tugging at my hair roots

ing bedstrings and would have to wait until one of the boys from the tea shop paid me a visit. I was much too long for the cot anyway, and if my feet didn't stick out at one end, my head lolled over the other, and I was in constant danger of choking.

Under the cot was my trunk. Apart from my clothes, it contained notebooks and diaries, photographs, scrapbook and other odds and ends that were part of a struggling writer's existence.

I did not live entirely alone. During cold or rainy weather, the boys from the tea shop, who normally slept on the

pavement, crowded into the room. And apart from them there were the lizards on the walls -- friends, these -- and a large rat who got in and out of the window and carried away manuscripts and clothing definitely in enemy.

June nights were the most uncomfortable. Mosquitoes emerged from all the ditches and gullies and ponds to swarm over Pipalnagar. Bug-biting it uncomfortable inside the woodwork of the cot, scrambled out at night and found their way under the sheet. The lizards wandered listlessly over the walls impatient for the monsoon rain, when they would be able to feast off thousands of other insects.

Everyone in Pipalnagar was waiting for the cool, quenching relief of the monsoon.

III

I woke every morning at five, as soon as the first bus moved out of its shed, which was situated only twenty or thirty yards down the road, dressed, went down to the tea shop for a glass of hot tea, a slice of buttered toast and then visited Deep Chand, the barber in his shop.

At seventeen I shaved about three times a week. Some times I shaved myself. But often, when I felt lazy, Deep Chand shaved me at the special concessional rate of two annas.

Give my head a good massage, Deep Chand. I said. My brain is not functioning these days. In my latest story there are three murders but it is boring just the same.

You must write a good book, said Deep Chand, beginning the ritual of the hair massage, his fingers squeezing my temples and tugging at my hair roots. Then you can make some money and clear out of Pipalnagar. Delhi is the place to go. Why I know, man who arrived in Delhi in

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

1947 with nothing but the clothes he wore and a few rupees. He began by selling thirsty travellers glasses of cold water at the railway station, then he opened a small tea shop, now he has two big restaurants and lives in a house as large as the Prime Minister's.

Nobody I reflected intended living in Pipalnagar for ever. Delhi was the city most people aspired to, but it was two hundred miles away and few could afford to settle there.

Deep Chand would have shifted his trade to another town if he had had the capital. In Pipalnagar his main customers were small shopkeepers, factory workers, labourers from the railway station.

Here I can charge only a minute for a haircut, he lamented. In Delhi I could charge a rupee.

IV

I was walking in the wheat field beyond the railway tracks when I noticed a boy lying across the footpath, his head and shoulders hidden by the wheat. I walked faster and when I came near I saw that the boy's legs were twitching. He seemed to be having some kind of fit.

The boy's face was white and his legs kept moving and his hands fluttered restlessly among the wheat stalks.

'What's the matter?' I said, kneeling down beside him, but he was still unconscious and could not answer.

I ran down the path to a Persian well and dipping the end of my shirt in a shallow trough of water soaked it well before returning to the boy. As I spunged his face the twitching ceased and though he still breathed heavily, his face was calm and his hand still. He opened his eyes and stared at me, but he didn't really see me.

You have bitten your



The boy's face turned white.

tongue. I said wiping a little blood from the corner of his mouth. Don't worry, I'll stay here with you until you are all

right, putting his chin on his knees, he passed his arms around his own nup boys.

'I'm all right now,' he said. 'What happened?' I asked, sitting down beside him.

'Oh, it is nothing, it often happens. I don't know why. I cannot control it.'

'Have you been to a doctor?'

'Yes. When the fit first started I went to the hospital. They gave me some pills which I had to take every day. But the pill made me so tired and sleepy that I couldn't work properly. So I stopped taking the pills. Now this happens to me once or twice a week. What does it matter? I'm all right when it's over and I do not feel anything when it happens.'

He got to his feet, dusting his clothes and smiling at me. He was a slim boy, long limbed

and bonny. There was a little tuft on his cheeks and the promise of a moustache.

He told me that his name was Suraj, that he went to a night school in the city and that he hoped to finish his High School exams in a few months time. He was studying hard, he said, and if he passed he hoped to get a scholarship to a good college. If he failed there was only the prospect of continuing in Pipalnagar.

I noticed a small tray of merchandise lying on the ground. It contained combs and buttons and little bottles of perfume. The tray was made to hang at Suraj's waist, supported by strips that went round his shoulders. All day he walked about Pipalnagar, sometimes covering ten or fifteen miles a day selling odds and ends to people at their houses. He made on an average two rupees a day, which was enough for his food and other necessities, and he managed to save about ten rupees a month for his school fees. He

kept at his stalls near the bus stop, or under shady jamun and mango trees. When the jamun fruit was ripe he would sit in a tree sucking the sour fruit until his lips were stained purple. There was a small nagging fear that he might get a fit while sitting in the tree, and fall off, but the temptation to eat jamuns was greater than his fear of falling.

All this he told me while we walked through the fields towards the bazaar.

'Where do you live?' I asked. 'I'll walk home with

'I don't live anywhere,' said Suraj. 'My home is not in Pipalnagar. Sometimes I sleep at the temple, or at the railway station. In the summer months I sleep on the grass of the municipal park.'

'Well, wherever it is you stay, let me come with you.'

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

We walked together into the town and parted near the bus stop. I returned to my room to try and do some writing while Suraj went into the bazaar to try and sell his wares. We had agreed to meet each other again.

I realised that Suraj was an epileptic, but there was nothing unusual about him being an orphan and a refugee. I liked his positive attitude to life, most people in Pipalnagar were resigned to their circumstances. I liked his gentleness, his quiet voice and the smile that flickered across his face regardless of whether he was sad or happy.

V

The temperature had touched 110 Fahrenheit and the small streets of Pipalnagar were empty. To walk barefooted on the scorching pavements was possible only for the labourers whose feet had developed several hard layers of protective skin and even these hardy men lay stretched out in the shade provided by trees and buildings.

I hadn't written anything in two weeks and though one or two small payments were due from a Delhi newspaper I could think of no substantial amount that was likely to come my way in the near future. I decided that I would dash off a couple of articles that same night and post them the following morning.

Having made this comforting decision I lay down on the floor in preference to the cot.

The touch of a cool floor on a hot day. I liked the touch of things. The touch of the earth, soft earth, grassy earth. Grass was good, especially dew-drenched grass. Wet earth too was soft and sensuous and smelt nice. Splashing through puddles and streams. I slept and dreamt of a cool clear stream in a forest glade where I bathed in gay abandon. A little further downstream

was another hither. I hailed him, expecting to see Suraj, but when the hither turned I found that it was my landlord's port-bellied rent-collector holding an accounts ledger in his hands. This woke me up and for the remainder of the day I worked hard at my articles.

Next morning when I opened the door I found Suraj asleep at the top of the steps. His tray lay at the bottom of the steps. He woke up as soon as I touched his shoulder.

'Have you been sleeping here all night?' I asked. 'Why didn't you come in?'

'It was very late' said Suraj. 'I didn't want to disturb you.'

'Your things while you were asleep.'

'Oh I sleep quite lightly. Besides I have nothing of great value. But I came here to ask you—'

'Do you need money?'

He laughed. 'Do all your friends mean money when they ask for favours?' 'No I want you take your meal with me tonight.'

'But where? You have no place of your own. It would be too expensive in a restaurant.'

'In your room?' said Suraj. 'I shall bring the meat and vegetables and cook them here. Do you have a cooker?'

'I think so. I said scratching my head in some perplexity. I will have to look for it.'

'I'll come at seven' said Suraj turning to go. 'Don't worry. I know how to cook.'

Suraj brought a chicken for dinner, a luxury in Pipalnagar and one to be indulged in only two or three times a year. He had bought the bird for seven rupees which was cheap. We spiced it and roasted it on a spit.

'I wish you could do this more often' I said as I dug my teeth into the soft flesh of a second leg.

'We should do it at least once a month,' said Suraj. 'It should be possible if we work hard.'

'You know how to work. You work from morning to evening and then you work again.'

'But you are a writer. That is different. You have to wait for the right moment.'

I laughed. 'Moods and moments are for geniuses. No, it's really a matter of working hard and I'm just plain lazy to tell the truth.'

'Perhaps you are writing the wrong things.'

'Perhaps I wish I could do something else. Even if I repaired bicycle tyres I'd make more money.'

'Then why don't you repair bicycle tyres?'

'Oh I would rather be a bad writer than a good repairer of cycle tyres. I brightened up. I could go into business though. Do you know I once owned a vegetable stall.'

'Wonderful! When was that?'

'Last month. I failed after two days.'

'Then you are not good at business. Let us think of something else.'

'I can tell fortunes with cards.'

'There are too many fortune tellers in Pipalnagar.'

'We won't talk of fortunes. I want to know more about you. And you must sleep here tonight. It is better than sleeping on the roadside.'

At noon when the shadows shifted and crossed the road a band of children inched down the empty street shouting and waving their satchels. They had been at their desks from early morning and now despite the hot sun they would have then flung while their elders slept on string chairs beneath leafy neem trees.

On the soft sand near the

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

river bed boys wrestled or played leap-frog. At alley corners where tall buildings shaded narrow passages, the favourite game was gulli danda.

The Gulli—a small piece of wood about four inches long sharpened to a point at each end—is struck with the Danda, a short stout stick. A player is allowed three hits and his score is the distance in danda lengths he hits the gulli.

Boys who were experts at the game sent the gulli flying far down the road sometimes into a shop or through a window pane which resulted in confusion, loud invective and a dash for cover.

A game for both children and young men was Kabbadi. This is a game that calls for good control of the breath and much agility. It was also known in different parts of India as *katu too kulkho* and *at upiya*. Ranu Deep Chand's younger brother excelled at this game. He was the Pipalnagar Kabbadi champion.

The game is played by two teams consisting of eight or nine members each who face each other across a dividing line. Each side in turn sends out one of its players into the opponents' area. This person has to keep on saying 'Kabbadi Kabbadi' very fast and without taking a second breath. If he returns to his side after touching an opponent that opponent is dead and out of the game. If however he is caught and cannot struggle back to his side while still holding his breath he is dead.

Ranu who was also a good wrestler knew all the Kabbadi folds and was particularly good at capturing an opponent.

Pitamber had vitality and confidence, and these were rare things in Pipalnagar. He wanted to go into the Army after



game was gulli danda

joining school and I thought this would be a happy chance.

He did not know if his father was dead or alive. He had lost touch with him. Literally, when he was born.

His father had been a farmer, a dark unfathomable man who spoke little, thought perhaps even less, and was vaguely aware that he had a son, a well-behaved boy who was given to introspection and dwelling at the riverbank when he should have been helping in the field.

Suraj's mother had been a subdued, silent woman, frail and consumptive. Her husband did not expect that she would live long, but Suraj did

know if she was living or dead.

He had lost his parents at Amritsar railway station in the days of Partition, when trains coming across the border from Pakistan disgorged themselves of thousands of refugees—or pulled into the station half-empty, drenched with blood and littered with corpses.

Suraj and his parents were lucky to escape one of these massacres. Had they travelled in an earlier train (they had tried desperately to get into one), they might have been killed.

Suraj was clinging to his mother, or while she tried to keep up with her husband.

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

who was elbowing his way through the frightened bewildered throng of refugees. Suraj collided with a burly Sikh and lost his grip on the sari.

The Sikh had a long curved sword at his waist, and Suraj stared up at him in awe and fascination at the man's long hair which had fallen loose and his wild black beard and the blood stains on his white shirt. The Sikh pushed him out of the way and when Suraj looked round for his mother she was not to be seen. She was hidden from him by a mass of restless bodies all pushing in different directions. He could hear her calling his name and tried to force his way through the crowds in the direction of the voice but he was carried the other way.

At night when the platform was empty he was still searching for his mother. Eventually the police came and took him away. They looked for his parents but without success and finally they sent the boy to a home for orphans. There were many children who had lost their parents at about the same time.

Suraj stayed at the orphanage for two years and when he was eight and felt himself a man he ran away.

He worked for some time as a helper in a tea shop but when he started having epileptic fits the shopkeeper asked him to leave and the boy found himself on the streets begging for a living. He begged for a year moving from one town to the next and ending up finally at Pipalnagar. By then he was twelve and really too old to beg but he had saved some money and with it he bought a small stock of combs buttons cheap perfumes and bangles and converting himself into a mobile shop went from door to door selling his wares.

Pipalnagar is a small town and there was no house which Suraj hadn't visited. Everyone

knew him and there were some who offered him food and drink and the children knew him well because he played on a small flute when he went on his rounds, and they followed him to listen to the flute.

VI

Suraj came to see me quite often and when he stayed late he slept in my room curling up on the floor and sleeping fitfully. He would always leave early in the morning before I could get him anything to eat.

"Should I go to Delhi Suraj?" I asked him one evening when he came in quite early.

"Why not? In Delhi there are many ways of making money."

And spending it too. "Why don't you come with me?"

"After my exams, perhaps. Not now."

"Well I can wait. I don't want to live alone in a big city."

"In the meantime write your book."

"I will try."

We decided we would try to save a little money from Suraj's small earnings and my own occasional payments from magazines. Even if we were to give Delhi a few days' trial we would need money to live on. We managed to put away twenty rupees one week but withdrew it when Pitamber asked for a loan to repair his bicycle. He returned the money in three instalments, and we could not save any of it.

Pitamber and Deep Chand also had plans for going to Delhi. Deep Chand dreamt of a vibrant bookshop in the capital. Pitamber planned on owning his own scooter rickshaw.

One day Suraj and I hired bicycles and rode out of Pipalnagar.

It was a hot sunny morning and we were perspiring after we had gone two miles, but a fresh wind sprang up suddenly and I could smell the rain in the air,

though there were no clouds to be seen.

"Let us go where there are no people at all," said Suraj. "I am a little tired of people. I see too many of them all day."

We got down from our cycles and pushing them off the road took a path through a paddy field and then a path through a field of young maize and in the distance we saw a tree, a crooked tree growing beside a well.

I do not even today know the name of that tree. I had never seen its kind before. It had a crooked trunk and crooked branches and it was clothed in thick broad crooked leaves, like the leaves on which food is served in the hazaars.

In the trunk of the tree was a large hole and when I set my cycle down with a crash two green parrots flew out of the hole and went dipping and swerving across the fields.

There was grass around the well cropped short by grazing cattle so we sat in the shade of the crooked tree, and Suraj untied the red cloth in which he had brought our food.

We ate our bread and vegetable curries and meanwhile the parrots returned to the tree.

"Let us come here every week," said Suraj stretching himself out on the grass.

It was a drowsy day, the air humid and he soon fell asleep. I too stretched myself out on the grass and closed my eyes but I did not sleep. I was aware instead of a number of different sensations.

I heard a cricket singing in the tree, the cooing of pigeons which lived in the walls of the old well, the soft breathing of Suraj, a rustling in the leaves of the tree, the distant drone of bees.

I smelt the grass and the old bricks round the well and the promise of rain.

When I opened my eyes I saw dark clouds on the horizon. Suraj was still sleeping, his

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

arms thrown across his face to keep the glare out of his eyes.

As I was thirsty I went to the well, and putting my shindlers to it, turned the wheel very slowly, walking around the well four times while cool clean water gushed out over the stones and along the channel to the fields.

I drank from one of the trays and the water tasted sweet because of its age. The deeper the wells the sweeter the water.

Sunil was sitting up now, looking at the sky.

'It's going to rain,' he said.

We pushed our cycles back to the main road and began riding homewards but we were still a mile out of Pipalnagar when it began to rain. A lashing wind swept the rain across our faces but we exulted in it and sang at the tops of our voices until we reached the bus stop.

Leaving the cycles at the line-hop we ran up the tickety-sawing steps to the room.

In the evening, as the breeze was lighting up, the rain stopped. We went to sleep quite early but at midnight I was woken by the moon shining full in my face—a full moon shedding its light all over Pipalnagar peeping and prying into every house, washing the empty streets, silencing the corrugated tin roofs.

VII

The lizards hung listlessly on the walls waiting for the moon rains which would bring out all the insects from the cracks and crannies.

One day clouds loomed up on the horizon growing rapidly into enormous towers. A faint breeze sprang up bringing with it the first rain drops. This was the moment everyone was waiting for. People ran out of the houses to take in the fresh breeze and the scent of those first few raindrops on the parched dusty earth.

Underground in their cracks and holes, the insects were

moving. Termites and white ants, which had been sleeping through the hot season, emerged from their lairs.

And then, on the second or third night of the monsoon came the great yearly flight of insects into the cool brief freedom of the night. Out of every crack from under the roots of trees huge winged insects emerged at first fluttering then heavily on this the first night

This was the hour of the lizards. Now they had their reward for those days of patient waiting. Flung their sticky pink tongues they devoured the insects as fast as they came. For hours they crammed their stomachs knowing that such a feast would not be theirs again for another year.

How wasteful nature is I thought. Through the whole hot season the insect world pre-



We got down from our cycle

pared for this flight out of darkness into light and not one of them survived its freedom.

The street lamp opposite the bus stop beneath my rented room cast a warm glow which gave the impression of one thick slowly revolving body

Sunil and I walked barefooted over the cool wet pavements across the railway lines and the river bed until we were not far from the crooked tree. Looting the landscape were old abandoned brick kilns.

When it rained heavily the hollows made by the kilns filled up with water. Sunil and I

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

found a small tank where we could bathe and swim. On a small mound in the middle of the tank stood a ruined hut, formerly inhabited by a watchman at the kiln.

We swam and then we wrestled on the young green grass.

Though I was heavier than Suraj and my chest was as sound as a new drum, he had a lot of power in his long wiry arms and legs and he pinioned me about the waist with his bony knees.

And then suddenly, as I started to press his back to the ground, I felt his body go tense. He stiffened, his thigh jerked against me, and his legs began to twitch. I knew that he had a hit coming on, but I was unable to get out of his grip. He held me more tightly as the hit took possession of him.

When I noticed his mouth working, I thrust the palm of my hand in sideways to prevent him from biting his tongue. But so violent was the convulsion that his teeth bit into my flesh. I shouted with the pain and tried to take my hand away, but he was unconscious and his jaw was set. So I closed my eyes and counted up to seven, and then I felt his muscles relax slowly and I was able to take my hand away.

My hand was bleeding a little, but I bound it in a handkerchief before Suraj fully recovered consciousness.

He didn't say much as we walked back to the town. He looked depressed and weak, but I knew it wouldn't take him long to recover his usual good spirits. He did not notice that I kept my hand out of sight. It was only at night, when he returned from his classes, that he noticed the bandage and asked me what had happened.

VIII

"Do you want to make some money?" asked Pritam, butting into the room like a test-cracker.

"I do," I said.

"What do we have to do for it?" asked Suraj, striking a cautious note.

"Oh nothing—carry a banner and walk in front of a procession."

"Why?"

"Don't ask me. It's some political stunt."

"Which party?"

"I don't know. Who cares?"

"All I know is paying someone to bring a banner."

"We do that badly. I see."



living
rickshaws
of the city's middle
speaking
Com will be

No banners for us, I said. But we may come along and watch.

And we did watch when later that morning the procession passed along our street. It

was a ragged procession of about a hundred people shouting slogans. Some of them were children, and some were men who did not know what it was all about, but they joined in the slogan shouting.

We didn't know much about it either. Because though the man in Pritam's rickshaw was loud and eloquent, his loud speaker was defective with the result that his words were punctuated with squeaks and an eerie whining sound. Pritam looked up and saw us standing on the balcony and gave us a wave and a wide grin. We decided to follow the procession at a discreet distance.

It was a protest march against something or the other, but we never did manage to find out the details. The destination was the municipal office and by the time we got there the crowd had increased to two or three hundred persons. Some to whom I had now joined up and things began to get out of hand. The man in the rickshaw was making a speech, another man standing on a wall was making a speech, and someone from the municipal office was confronting the crowd and making a speech of his own.

A stone was thrown then, another. From a sprinkling of stones it soon became a shower of stones, and then some police on bicycles who had been standing by watching the fun were ordered into action. They ran into the crowd where it was thickest, brandishing stout sticks.

We were caught up in the impede that followed. A stone flung, no doubt, at a policeman, was badly aimed and struck me on the shoulder. May pulled me down a side street. Looking back we saw Pritam's cycle-rickshaw lying on its side in the middle of the road, but there was no sign of Pritam.

Later he turned up in my room with a cut over his left eyebrow which was bleeding freely. Suraj washed the cut

and I poured iodine over it—Pitamber did not flinch—and covered it with sticking-plaster. The cut was quite deep and should have had stitches, but Pitamber was superstitious about hospitals and said he knew very few people who had come out of them alive. (It was of course, the Pipalnagar hospital he had in mind.)

So he acquired a scar on his forehead.

It went rather well with his demonic good looks.

IX

Thank God for the monsoon said Suraj. We won't have any more demonstrations on the roads until the weather improves.

Rain fell on Pipalnagar.

And until the rain stopped Pipalnagar was fresh and clean and alive. The children ran naked out of their houses, splashed through the street. The gutters overflowed and the road became mountain stream coming merrily towards the bus stop.

At the bus stop there was confusion. Newly arrived passengers were surrounded on all sides by a sea of mud and rain water while some of our own cycle-riders have just died of it. I am trying to cheer others up. A result: only half the passengers found conveyance.

While the other half found themselves knee-deep in Pipal-nagar mud.

Pipalnagar mud has a quality all its own and is not easily removed or forgotten. But I do love it because it's soft and squelchy, but humans abhor it. Two parts of it are the best clay which comes alive at the slightest touch and clings tenaciously to human flesh. It sinks into it and has to be wrenched out. Fingers become webbed. Get it into your hair and there is nothing you can do about it except to go to Deep Chand and have your head shaved.

While London has its fog and Paris its sewers Pipalnagar has its mud.

Pitamber of course succeeded in getting as his passenger the most attractive girl to step off the bus and showed her his skill and daring by taking her home by the longest and roughest road.

The rain swirled over the trees and roofs of the town and



she felt her legs stiff.

He picked it up.

It would not close and it was swept into the room attended by cat. When finally

asking and own the

through the dusty designs I had made with my feet. I placed tins and mugs in strategic positions and then satisfied that everything was under control, sat on the cot and watched the roof tops through the window.

There was a loud banging on the door. It flew open and there was Suraj standing on the threshold drenched to the skin. Coming in he began to dry himself while I made desperate efforts to close the door again.

Glasses of hot sweet milky tea on a rainy day. We sat on the cot enjoying the brew. I felt fresh and full of optimism. It seems like some tea, he said.

One day I'll write a book," I said. Not just a thriller, but a real book about real people. Perhaps it will be about you and me and Pipalnagar. And then will be famous and our troubles will be over and new troubles will begin. I don't mind problems as long as they are new.

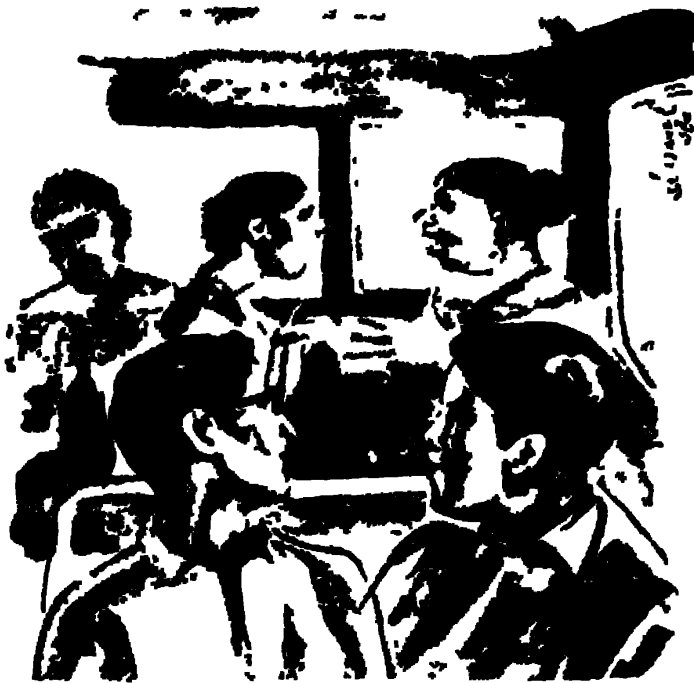
But first I must pass my exams, said Suraj. They start next week. And until the result is out I must keep selling buttons and combs.

While you're studying I'll write my book. That's it. I'll start tonight. It is an auspicious time, the first night of the monsoon.

A tree must have fallen across the vines somewhere because the lights would not come on. So I lit a small oil lamp and while it spluttered in the street's darkness Suraj opened his books and with one hand on a book and the other playing with his toes this helped him concentrate. He began to study.

I took the ink down from the shelf and finding it empty, added a little rain water to it from one of the mugs I sat down beside Suraj and began to write but the pen was no good and made blotches all over the paper and I didn't really know what I was to write about.

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR



Two women behind me started quarrelling

although I was full of writing just then.

So I went out and began pacing up and down the road. There I found Pitamber. He was a little drunk, very merry and prancing about in the middle of the road.

'What are you dancing for?' I asked.

'I'm happy, so I'm dancing,' said Pitamber.

'And why are you happy?'

'I feel because I'm dancing,' he said.

The rain stopped and the neem tree gave out a strong sweet smell.

X

Flowers in Pipalnagar—did they exist?

As a child I knew a garden in Lucknow where there were beds of phlox and petunias and another garden where only roses grew. In the fields round Pipalnagar I had seen the thorn apple—a yellow butterfly-nesting among thorny leaves. But in the Pipalnagar bazaar there were no flowers except one.

It was a marigold growing out of a crack on my balcony.

I had removed the plaster from the base of the plant and filled in a little earth which I watered every morning. The plant was healthy and sometimes it produced a little orange marigold.

Sometimes Suraj plucked a flower and kept it in his tray, among the combs and buttons and comb-bottles. His exams were over and he was back on his rounds. Sometimes he gave the flower to a passing child—to a girl who ran away or to a small boy who tore it to shreds.

Suraj had a flute which he played whenever he was tired of going from house to house.

He would sit beneath a shady banyan or peepul tree put his tray aside and take out his flute. The haunting notes travelled down the road in the afternoon stillness and children came to it beside him and listened to the flute music. They were very quiet when Suraj played because there was some charm about the tune he played.

Suraj sometimes made flutes out of pieces of bamboo but he never sold them, he gave them to the children he liked. He would sell almost anything, but not his flutes.

Sometimes Suraj played the flute at night when he lay awake unable to sleep and even when I fell asleep, I would hear the flute in my dreams. Sometimes he took it with him to the crooked tree and played for the benefit of the birds but the parrots only made harsh noises and flew away.

Once when Suraj was playing his flute to a small group of children he had a fit. The flute fell from his hands, and he began to roll about in the dust on the roadside. The children were frightened and ran away.

But they did not stay away for long. The next time they heard the flute play, they came to listen as usual.

XI

It was Lord Krishna's birth day and the rain came down as heavily as it must have done on the day Krishna was born. Krishna is the best beloved of all the gods. Young mothers laugh or weep as they read or hear the pranks of his boyhood; young men pray to be as tall and as strong as Krishna was when he killed King Kamsa's elephant and Kamsa's wrestlers; young girls dream of a lover as daring as Krishna to carry them off in a chariot; grown-up men envy the wisdom and statesmanship with which he managed the affairs of his kingdom.

The rain came suddenly and took everyone by surprise. In a few seconds people were drenched and within ten minutes the street was flooded. The temple tank overflowed, the railway lines disappeared and the old wall near the bus stop shivered and fell silently, the sound of its collapse drowned by the noise of the rain.

A naked young man with a dancing bear cavorted in the middle of the vegetable market.

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Pitamber's rickshaw churned through the flood water, while Pitamber sang lustily.

Wading knee deep down the road I saw roadside vendors salvaging whatever they could. Plastic toys, cabbages and utensils floated away and were seized by urchins. The water had risen to the level of the shop fronts and floors were awash. Deep Chand Ramu and a customer were using buckets to bail the water out of their shop.

The rain stopped as suddenly as it had begun. The sun came out. The water began to find its outlet flooding other low lying areas and a paper boat came sailing between my legs.

Next morning the morning on which the results of Suraj's examinations were due I rose early, the first time I had got up before Suraj, and went down to the news agency. A small crowd of students had gathered at the bus stop, joking with each other and hiding their nervousness with a show of indifference.

There were not many passengers on the first bus and there was a mad grab for newspapers as the bundle tumbled with a thud on the pavement. Within half an hour the newsboy had sold all his copies. It is the best day of the year for him.

I went to the news agency relating to Pipalnagar, but I couldn't find Suraj's roll number on the list of successful candidates. I had the number written down on a slip of paper and I looked at it again to make sure that I had compared it correctly with the others then I went through the news paper once more.

When I returned to the room Suraj was sitting on the door step. I didn't have to tell him he had failed. He knew by the look on my face. I sat down beside him and we said nothing for some time.

'Never mind' said Suraj.

eventually I will pass next year.

I realized that I was more depressed than he was and that he was trying to console me.

'If only you'd had time' I said.

'I have plenty of time now. Another year. And you will have time in which to finish your book and then we can go away together. Another year of Pipalnagar won't be so bad. As long as I have your friendship almost everything can be tolerated even my ill-fate.'

He stood up, the rain hanging from his shoulders.

'What could you like to buy' he said.

XII

Another year of Pipalnagar was not to be. I received a letter from the editor of a news paper calling me to Delhi for

an opportunity would not come my way again.

But I needed a shirt. The few I possessed were either frayed at the collars or torn at the shoulders. I hadn't been able to afford a new shirt for over a year and I couldn't afford one now. I knew that struggling writers weren't expected to dress very well but I felt that in order to get a job I would need both clean cut and clean shirt.

Where was I to get a shirt? Suraj generally wore an old red striped T-shirt, he washed it every evening.

He was tight on for him. He did not have

but what I needed was nothing white something respectable.

I went to Deep Chand. He had a collection of shirts. He is only too glad to lend me a shirt. But they were all brightly coloured, hints of pink and pur-



Pitamber was on the platform

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

ples and magentas. They could not possibly impress an editor. No one was going to employ a writer in a pink shirt.

They looked fine on Deep Chand but he had no need to look respectable.

Finally Pitamber came to my rescue. He didn't bother with shirts himself except in winter but he was able to borrow a white shirt from a friend at the school who'd got it from the relative of a convict in exchange for certain favours.

This shirt will make you look respectable' said Pitamber. 'To be respectable - what an adventure!'

XIII

Freedom

The moment the bus was out of Pipalnagar and the field opened out on all sides I knew that I was free - that I had at last been free held back only by my own weakness and hesitation and the habits that had grown around me.

All I had to do was to sit in a bus and go somewhere.

I sat near the open window of the bus and let the cool breeze from the fields play against my face. Herons and snipe waded among the lotus roots in flat green ponds. Blue jays swooped round the telegraph poles. Children jumped naked into the canals that wound through the fields.

Because I was happy it seemed to me that everyone else was happy: the driver, the conductor, the passengers, the men in the fields or driving bullock carts. When two women behind me started quarrelling over their seats I helped to placate them. Then I took a small girl by the hand and pointed out crabs and buffaloes and vultures and many dogs.

Six hours later the bus crossed the bridge over the swollen Jomna river, passed under the walls of the great red fort built by a Moghul Emperor and entered the old city of Delhi.

I found it strange to be in a city again after several years in Pipalnagar. It was a little frightening now. I felt like a stranger. No one was interested in me. In Pipalnagar people wanted to know each other or at least to know about each other. In Delhi no one cared who you were.

Like big cities, Delhi was where it was prospering without a doubt.

After a day and a night of loneliness I found myself thinking that Suraj had been right. I began to wish that I was back in Pipalnagar. But the job was offered to me. I did not have the courage to refuse it. I was offered a salary of thirty months' pay monthly compared to what I had been given.

After a long time I began to feel that I had made a mistake. I spent a long time thinking about the future. I was not sure if I should stay in Delhi or go back to Pipalnagar.

The months to come. And when I wandered about the streets of Delhi I thought of Suraj wandering about Pipalnagar with that tray full of buttons, combs and ribbons.

I slept in the railway waiting room and all night long I heard the shunting engines and conjured up visions of places with sweet names like Kundikotam, Krishnagar, Polumurwa dreamt of palm-fringed beaches and inland lagoons of the echoing chambers of deserted cities, red sandstone and white marble of temples in the sun and elephants slowly moving.

XIV

We were on the platform when the train steamed into the station in the early hours of a damp September day. I waved to him from the age window and shouted

ed that everything had gone well.

But everything was not well. When I got off the train Pitamber told me that Suraj had been ill—that he'd had a fit on a lonely stretch of road the previous afternoon, and had lain on the sun for over an hour. Pitamber had found him and brought him home suffering from heat stroke.

I found Suraj sitting up on the strong bed drinking hot tea. He looked pale and weak but his smile was reassuring.

'Don't worry,' he said, 'it will be all right.'

He was bad last night, said Pitamber. He had fever and kept talking, as in a dream. But what he says is true, he is better this morning.

Thanks to Pitamber, said Suraj. It is good to have friends.

Come with me to Delhi, said Suraj. I will. I have got up now. You can live with me and attend a school regularly. I throw away your junk. You won't need it any more.

It is good for friends to help each other, said Suraj, but it is not good that one should live upon the other. I will keep the junk and I will make a living before and I will continue to study. When I can live without

in you in Delhi but I will not. Poor Pipalnagar is only a dream to live here. When you are sorry to leave it, I will be sorry.

Yes, I will be sorry, I said. A part of me will still be in Pipalnagar.

XV

Deep Chand was happy to hear that I was leaving.

Follow you soon, he said. There is money to be made in Delhi, cutting hair. Girls are keeping it short these days.

But men are growing it long.

True. So I shall open a

BUS STOP, PIPALNAGAR

Barber Shop for Ladies and a Beauty Saloon for Men! Ramu can attend to the ladies."

Ramu winked at me in the mirror. He was still at the stage of teasing girls on their way to school or college. Putting him in charge of a Beauty Saloon would be a hazardous venture. But the snip of Deep Chand's scissors made me sleepy as I sat in his chair. His fingers beat a rhythmic tattoo on my scalp. It was my last haircut in Pipalnagar and Deep Chand did not charge me for it. I promised to write to him as soon as I had settled down in Delhi.

The next day Suraj was stronger and I said, "Come let us go for a walk. Let us visit our crooked tree. Where is your flute Suraj?"

"I don't know. Let us look for it."

We searched the room and our belongings for the flute but we could not find it.

It must have been left on the roadside, said Suraj. Never mind. I will make another.

I could see his flute lying in the dust on the roadside and somehow this made me feel sad. I would be saying goodbye to Suraj in a day or two. I could see him walking along lonely dusty roads selling buttons and ribbons.

But Suraj was full of high spirits as we walked across the railway lines and through the fields.

The rains are over, he said, kicking off his chappals and lying down on the grass. You can smell the autumn in the air. Somehow, it makes me feel light-hearted. Yesterday I was sad, and tomorrow I will be sad again, but today I know that I am happy. I want to live on and on. One lifetime cannot satisfy my heart.

"A day is a lifetime," I said. I'll remember this day—the way the sun touches us, the way the grass bends, the smell



We scuffed across the

of the leaf as I crush it. Each day is a lifetime. Each day is a gut.

XVI

At six every morning the first bus arrives and the passengers alight looking sleepy and dishevelled and rather discouraged by their first sight of Pipalnagar. When they have gone their various ways the bus is driven into the shed. Cows congregate at the dustbin and the pavement dwellers come to life stretching their tired limbs on the hard stone steps. I carry the bucket up the steps to my room and bathe for the last time on the open balcony.

In the villages buffaloes are wallowing in green ponds while naked urchins sit astride them scrubbing their backs and a crow or water bird perches on a glistening neck. The parrots are busy in the crooked tree and a slim green snake bask in the sun on our island near the brick kiln.

In the hills the mists have

lifted and the distant mountains are fringed with snow.

It is Autumn, and the rains are over. The earth meets the sky in one broad bold sweep.

A land of thrusting hills. Terraced hills wood covered and wind swept. Mountains where the gods speak gently to the lonely. Hills of green grass and grey rock misty at dawn hazy at noon molten at sunset where fierce fresh torrents rush to the valleys below.

A quiet land of fields and ponds shaded by ancient trees and ringed with palms where sacred rivers are touched by temples where temples are touched by the southern seas.

This is the land I should write about. Pipalnagar should be forgotten. I should turn aside from it to sing instead of of it.

But only yesterday is splendid. And here no other sun is sweeter than I to sing of tomorrow. I can only sing of today of Pipalnagar where I have lived and loved.



A stone wheel from the Temple of the Sun at Konark, Orissa.

Sun Worship in India and Abroad

ANIMESH CHANDRA
RAY CHOUDHURY

SINCE the very dawn of creation the Sun has been worshipped by man as the greatest source of Life and Light.

In ancient Egypt the Sun was regarded as a god being identified first with Ita or Re and later with Osiris who came to be considered also as the god of death and resurrection.

In ancient Greece Apollo the sun-god was also believed to be the god of wisdom. He was held in great veneration and supposed to be driving a fiery chariot across the sky every day. The far-famed oracle of Apollo in the temple at Delphi used to be consulted on every important occasion public and private.

In the Far East the Japanese for centuries believed that their Emperor was directly descended from the Sun who was identified with the goddess Amaterasu the sister of the Moon-god.

In the language of the Hottentots just as in Teutonic the moon is 'he' the sun is 'she' the latter be-

ing regarded as in Japan, as a female divinity.

In the New World sun-worship is prevalent in the agricultural regions of south-east and south-west United States and in Mexico Central and the Andean region. The dominant of North America worship the sun believing the peace pipe to be the gift of the sun in the council the pipe ritual ways passed around following the sun's course. Among the Aztecs of Mexico the sun is regarded as the supreme deity and many relics of sun temples and sun worship are found scattered over South America.

In India many are the legends investing the sun with divinity and healing powers. Every morning at sunrise orthodox Hindus salute the Sun with the chanting of hymn in praise of the god which may be translated as follows —

'O son of the sage Kashyapa radiant as the hibiscus flower O great splendence dispeller of darkness and slayer of all

evil and maker of day I bow to thee in reverence'

Legend says that once upon a time Samba, son of Sudhishna was cursed by his father to become a leper on account of adultery with the Gopis at the contrivance of Nradra but that he was eventually cured of his leprosy by propitiating the Sun god in the Mathura Vana. It is further narrated how Samba found an image of the Sun on a lotus floating on the river Chandrabhaga and how he installed that image in a temple erected by him. This is the legendary explanation of the origin of the famous Sun Temple of Konarka or Konarak the only one of its kind not only in India but the whole world.

The name Konarka literally means the Sun at the corner or Kona. Perhaps the temple was so called because the Padmakshetra or Lotus held the place where the temple was erected according to legend was situated at the north-east corner of the Chakrakshetra or Puri.

Twenty-one miles from

SUN WORSHIP IN INDIA AND 'ABROAD

Puri along the sea coast lies this colossal temple which even in its present ruined state has power to excite the wonder and admiration of every beholder.

Whatever the legendary origin of the temple, its foundation and construction on a hallowed spot by the shore are ascribed by history to Raja Narsimha Deva, son of Anangabhimana Deva III who was one of the most powerful kings of the Ganga dynasty that ruled in Orissa for more than three hundred years.

Regarding this temple the *Aini Akhbari* of Abul Fazal says, 'the Sun Temple near Purnanath exhausted twelve years' revenue of Orissa to build it. It measuring with 1150 cubits high and 10 cubits wide. Within this wall is three doors. At the eastern door were two beautiful elephant statues; at the western two caparisoned equestrian statues; at the northern two tigers on elephant backs. In front stand a fifty foot high black stone pillar. The visitor has to ascend many stair ways and come into a big enclosure where he find a big dome of stone with sun and stars carved on the top of it. All around its circumference are found innumerable figures of men and women in different postures some kneeling and some with eyes down-cast in different poses. Among the figures are seen many mythical animals. The temple is supposed to be 730 years old. Raja Narsimha Deva built it as an undying monument to his glory. There are twenty eight other tem-

ples adjoining the main one—six in front of the northern gate way and twenty-two without any surrounding wall or enclosure.'

Abul Fazl's description seems to be based not on personal observation but on hearsay and local tradition and as such is not free from inaccuracies regarding dates and architectural details about the temple. The *Madala Patra* or chronicles preserved in the archives of the Jagannath Temple in Puri ascribe the erection of the Konarka Temple to Narasimha Nrusingha Deva who can be no other than Narasimha I of the Ganga dynasty who reigned over the period 1185-1211 AD. Perhaps the most correct period in Orissa history. Abul Fazl is of opinion that the temple was built some what over 700 years ago and that would take the chronology of the building to a much earlier period i.e. to the middle or end of the 6th century AD.

The Sanskrit 1201 corresponds to 1282 AD. It has been recorded in the *Madala Patra* the date of the completion of the temple also cannot be accepted as the temple was erected in the fifth and sixth decade of the 13th century AD to the period time of Narasimha Deva may with reason be probably be accepted as the period for the commencement and completion of the great temple. Historians agree in the view that the reign of Narasimha I was an epoch making period in Orissa history in so far as this time recording victories over the Moslems

stemmed the tide of Moslem sway over North-eastern India and saved Orissa, at least for three centuries, from annexation to the Pathan Empire. These victories raised the prestige of the Ganga King in the eyes of the contemporary Hindu kings to such a degree that he was naturally seized with an ardent desire to build a wonderful edifice worthy of his exalted position one that might serve both as a temple to his favourite deity but also as an enduring monument to his own glory—the 'Kirtistambha' as we might call it. No wonder that Narasimha Deva latched on the edifice to the cause, fondle and imagination of a great builder exhausted upon it nearly all the resources of his State—twelve years' revenue of Orissa which meant nearly thirty crore rupees.

What thoughts or dreams prompted Narasimha Deva to build such a stupendous monument of incomparable beauty among the shifting and dunes of a desolate beach shall ever remain one of the great unknowns of Indian history. Perhaps the site selected for a traditional sanctity is the legendary spot where Samba discovered the face of the Sun on a lotus floating on the river Chakrabhaga, a name which according to some scholars later on became corrupted into 'Konarka'. During the Budhist period also as some historians believe Konarka was a flourishing city being identified with Chakrasala mentioned by Yuan Chwang in his chronicles as a city on the South-east of Orissa "above

SUN WORSHIP IN INDIA AND ABREJAZ

twenty ft in circuit, which was a thoroughfare and a resting place for the sea-going traders and had a lofty Stupa with artistic images. The colossal temple of Konarka whose ruins we see today may well represent a laudible attempt on the part of Narasingha Deva to resuscitate the glories of an ancient legendary city on the sea-beach.

The temple chronicles say that the images of Surya and Chandra the presiding deities were subsequently brought away to Puri by another monarch of the same name Narasingha Deva belonging to the Bhoja dynasty (A.D. 1628-1652).

Of the twenty-eight minor temples mentioned by Abul Fazal no trace remains today and of the great temple itself there is but a small remnant viz. Jagmohan or the dancing hall. The Vimana

the main temple which enshrined the presiding deities and is believed to have been built in the shape of a wheel chariot (the even-horse-drawn chariot of the Sun god) has fallen off due to an accident which is believed to have knocked it down sometime in the 17th century but even the remnants that we see today enable us to reconstruct the whole. The main temple was a Sikhara or Kirtimukha temple like the temples of Lingaraja at

Bhubaneswara and Jagannatha at Puri and also had a Jagmohana and a Nutmunda the latter being situated to the east of the former with an intervening space of 30 feet between the two structures. In front of the main temple was a black stone pillar known as the Arun Stambha which was subsequently removed to Puri by the Machattas and placed in front of the Jagmohan temple where it can be seen today.

In 1824 when Mr. Stirling visited Konarka only a small section of the temple was standing about 120 feet in height which gave to the ruin a singular appearance something resembling that of a ship under sail. Mr. Stirling narrates in interesting story told by the natives of the place to account for the destruction of the temple. A load-stone of immense size was formerly lodged in the summit of

the tower which had the power to draw ashore all vessels passing near the coast. The inconvenience of this was so much felt that during the Moghul times nearly two centuries before Stirling's visit the crew of a ship lured it a distance of 100 miles down the coast attached the temple, pulled the tower and carried off the load-stone. The priests alarmed at the violation of the sanctity of the place, removed the images to

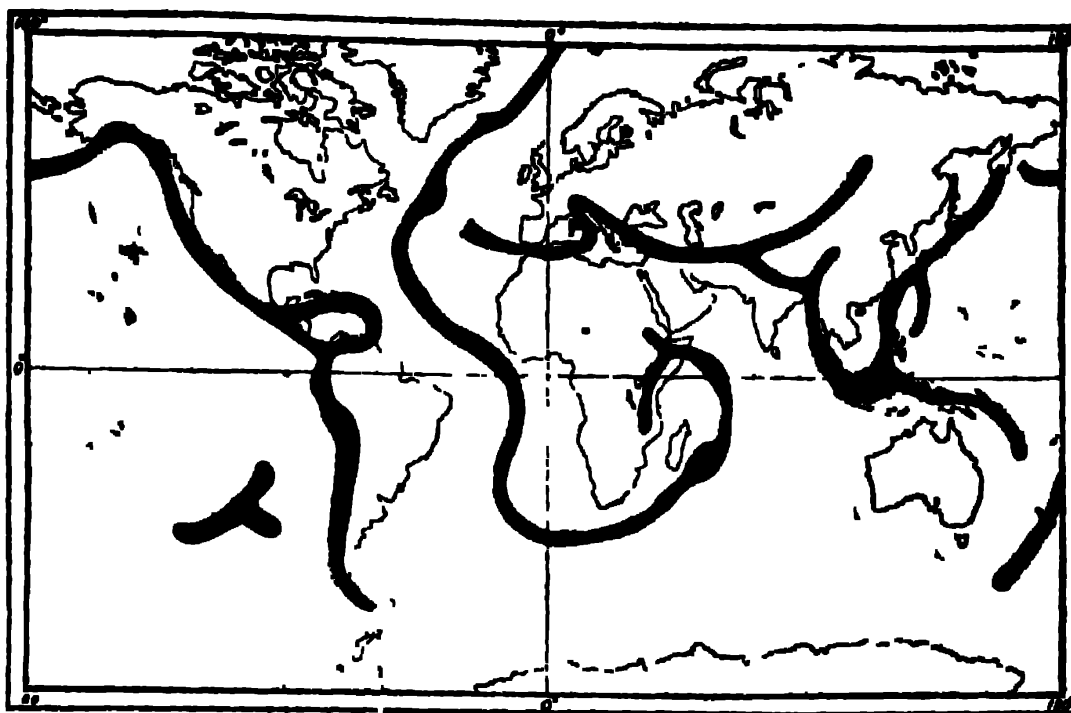
Puri and the temple became deserted and ruined.

Mr. Stirling goes in raptures over the innumerable sculptured figures, so life-like and vivid, that decorate the walls and outer faces of the door ways. He says 'The skill and labour of the best artists seem to have been reserved for the finely polished slabs of chlorite which line and decorate the outer faces of the door ways. The whole of the sculpture on these figures comprising men and animals foliage and arabesque patterns is executed with the degree of taste propriety and freedom which would stand comparison with some of our best specimens of Gothic architectural ornament. The workmanship remains too perfect as if it has just come from under the chisel of the sculptor owing to the extreme hardness and durability of the stone' (Stirling's *Antiquities of Orissa*, p. 100).

Mr. Stirling says that the temple for its size is without comparison the most richly ornamented building extant at least in the whole world. To these monuments we might add a third viz. that of Dr. W. W. Hunter who says in his book on Orissa.

The most exquisite memorial of Sun worship in India or I believe in any country is the temple of Konarka upon the Orissan





earthquake

earthquake

EARTHQUAKES

M. P. RAO

EARTHQUAKES are natural calamities and of late they are on the increase and in our own country they have gained importance due to the unexpected earthquake shocks of great intensity which have occurred on the peninsular India viz. at Koyana in December 11, 1967 and near Vizianwada on April 11, 1969. We have read in newspapers about a very violent earthquake the worst in the century for Australia which shook Melbourne and other places in southern Australia on June 20, 1969. No human casualties have been reported but extensive damage to structures has been caused.

The last severe earthquake claiming deaths on a large scale

with numerous earthquake victims occurred in the afternoon of August 1, 1968 when over 1000 people lost their lives. The most disastrous earthquake in our subcontinent was the famous Quetta earthquake (Quetta is then in undivided India) which claimed 6000 lives and over a lakh of persons were injured moreover practically all the buildings in Quetta were reduced to the ground.

The Quetta earthquake is considered to be one of the most destructive earthquakes on record on account of the fact that it occurred at 10.05 A.M. on May 31, 1935 when most people were asleep and were just killed before they knew what was happening. Quetta was a military cantonment at that time and the armed forces also lost

heavily. Even so they were the first to arrive on the scene and clear the debris and rescue people in response to their appeal.

There is nothing to compare with the most catastrophic Yokohama earthquake of September 1, 1923 which took a most appalling toll of 99,350 people with 4,475 missing and another 10,750 injured.

According to official estimates the misery was so great that the Emperor of Japan was moved to throw open his palace gates for pitching of the tents to help the earthquake refugees.

Earthquakes were not new from time immemorial and some of the earliest earthquakes of yore when the earth was cooling from its molten state to the present exterior solid state must

EARTHQUAKES

have been catastrophic indeed, but then life did not exist on the earth.

Nowadays the earth experiences a modest 1,000,000 earthquakes a year in different parts of the world which fall into very great, great, moderate and slight intensities. These earthquakes, especially the big ones, occur generally along the 'Earthquake Zones' or 'Seismic Belts' which have been demarcated by seismologists and geologists as areas most vulnerable to earthquakes.

It is a fact worthy of note that very violent earthquakes have occurred in the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea) near Socotra Island, in the high mountains

of Mongolia and off the coast of Kamchatka, but nobody seems to take notice of them except the seismologist who records them on his delicate instruments called seismographs which can record earthquakes from any part of the world.

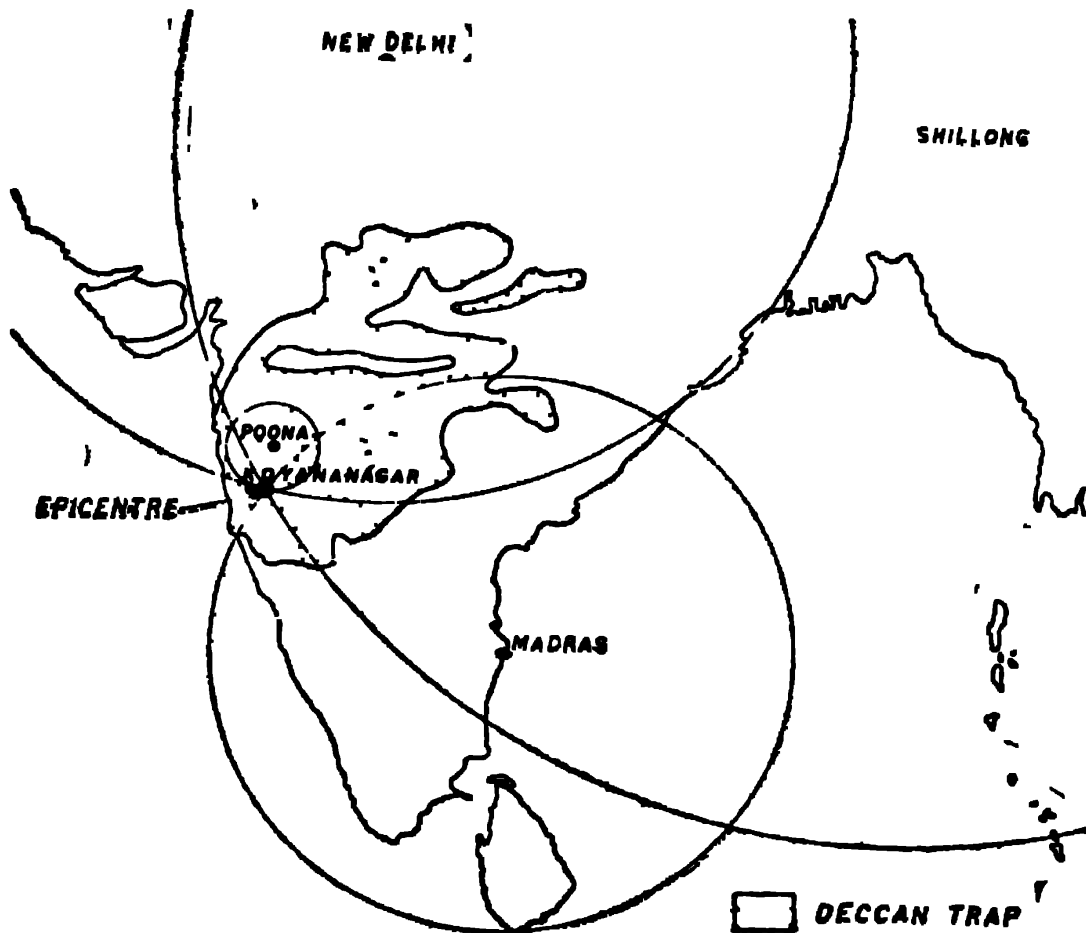
On the other hand, even a slight or mild earthquake can attract worldwide attention because of the large death toll. An example of this is the shock earthquake which rocked Agadir in Morocco on February 29, 1960, in which a toll of 10,000 lives with another 20,000 on the casualty list. The most unfortunate feature of this earthquake was that the epicentre of the

earthquake was just a few miles in the sea from Agadir.

Earthquakes are of three kinds viz Volcanic, Tectonic and Plutonic. About 4 per cent of the earthquakes are volcanic, 85 per cent tectonic and the remaining 6 per cent plutonic.

Volcanic earthquakes which are the least common are confined to small areas around the volcanoes. These earthquakes caused by explosions taking place inside the volcano resulting in the rock movements and displacements.

The hot molten lava and pumice and volcanic ash are shot out of the volcano which is plentiful enough engulf the surrounding areas. The ancient



Determination of the epicentre of the Koyana earthquake of December 11, 1967. There are about a dozen seismological observatories in India. Epicentral distances of a minimum of three stations are required to fix the epicentre. The figure also shows the extent of the Deccan trap area considered to be the stablest region (seismically speaking) in the world.

EARTHQUAKES

cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in Italy, with their high degree of civilization were completely buried by the lava and volcanic ash from the Vesuvius volcano in the great eruption of that fateful day in November 79 A.D. The eruption took place suddenly and took the populace by surprise and there was hardly any time for them to escape.

By far the biggest volcanic eruption in human history is that of the volcano Kralatau on August 27, 1883. The volcano situated on an island of the same name at the mouth of the Sunda strait separating Sumatra from Java blew up in the air and the whole island completely disappeared under the sea. The monstrous sea wave which follows all major

earthquakes is some 40 kms (25 miles) thick. The damage done by tectonic earthquakes of which the recent Koyu earthquake is an example is very great on account of the fact that their place of origin or focus is very shallow, usually less than 40 kms. The damage of course is the greatest at the epicentre which is the area on the surface of the earth immediately above the focus of the earthquake. Tectonic earthquakes, especially the bigger ones are usually followed by after shocks of lesser intensity for several years. The Koyu earthquake has for example over 1,000 after shocks of which even only one of moderate intensity is the remaining all being of slight intensity. The very great Asian earthquake of June

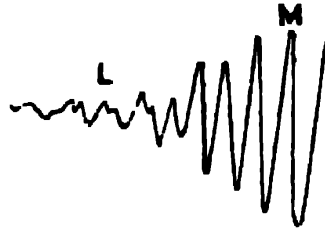
quakes are felt in some well defined areas in the world like the Hindukush mountains in the islands and the west of Indonesia. Plutonic earthquakes are not followed by after shocks.

The main cause of the earthquakes is due to the snapping of the rock in the earth's crust due to strains developing on it. After shocks which follow the main shock get distributed at various smaller distances from the main rupture of the rock where subsidiary strains develop.

Another cause of earthquakes is due to the cooling of the crust of the earth, slow process as it is. In the process of cooling the outer crust of the earth is continuously contracting to such an extent that the whole of the material of the outer crust cannot



SMs



of the earthquake. The time interval is a minute, to a second or a fraction of a second. The scale is in centimeters. The scale is prepared by the Indian Council of Scientific Research.

earthquakes along the coasts of which occurs below the beds of ocean, the Japanese call these seismic sea waves Tsunami. Swept round with a velocity of 300 miles per hour and drowned 40,000 people along the coasts of Java and Sumatra. The explosion of the Kralatau incidentally is the biggest sound heard by man from historic times and it was heard as far away as Ceylon, Burma, and China. The sound waves and pressure waves set in motion by the explosion went round the earth several times before dying away.

Tectonic earthquakes are shallow earthquakes with their origin in the upper crust of the earth which is considered to be the biggest earthquake on record was followed by several thousand after shocks extending over a period of ten years.

Plutonic earthquakes are deep-focus earthquakes with their average depth 90-100 km below the surface of the earth. Depth is great as 400 kms and more. They have also been recorded in exceptional cases. On account of their depth, plutonic earthquakes are not usually destructive due to the dissipation of their energy while passing through greater areas of the earth's material but they are felt over greater areas than plutonic areas although to a much lesser degree. Plutonic earth

quakes are not so comfortably accommodated on the lower layer which is known as the Mantle. During the process strains appear in the crust resulting in the crumpling of the crust which causes the throwing up of folds on the surface. These folds are none other than our mountains. The Himalayan ranges are a clear example of this mountain building process and they are comparatively young. In fact the process is still going on. During the mountain building process, portions of the fractured strain of the earth slip over one another resulting in what are known as faults. The earth tries to readjust its equilibrium along fault zones which results

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In the quaking of the earth when the fault slips it causes friction and a series of elastic waves is set in motion which can be recorded by seismographs.

Seismographs are sensitive instruments which can pick and record earthquake waves practically from anywhere in the world. The fundamental principle of the seismograph is derived from the pendulum. A horizontal pendulum whose period should be more than that of the earthquake waves (\sim seconds) with arrangements for optical magnification and photographic recording constitutes a seismograph. Of course the seismograph has other refinements like that for damping the oscillations set in motion by the earthquake so that different types of earthquake waves can be identified for tabulation and computation of earthquake data.

Very high magnification seismographs working on the electromagnetic principle are now available which not only record minor earthquakes even occurring in distant parts of the world but also record atomic explosion both overground and underground. Of course the seismologist can distinguish between a natural earthquake record and the record of an artificial source like atomic explosions.

To R. D. Oldham who was the Director of the Geological Survey of India Calcutta during the turn of the last century goes the credit of identifying and interpreting the wavy record of an earthquake. On a detailed and painstaking study of the very great earthquake of June 12, 1897 which had its epicentre on the Assam plateau he found out a way of determining the distance of the earthquakes and their epicentre. Since then seismologists pertaining to this earthquake from foreign observatories analysed them and found out a way of determining the epicentres of earthquakes.

The horizontal disturbance

on the record due to an earthquake is called the P wave (or Push wave) which is longitudinal in its propagation and hence the fastest.

The P wave is followed by the S wave (or Shear wave) which is transverse in character and hence slower than the P wave. The P wave has an average velocity of \sim 4 kms per second through the crust of the earth and the S wave in average velocity of $4/3$ kms per second. By measuring the time interval between the recording of the P wave and the S wave accurately to a second it is possible to find out the recording station. The seismologist has ready tables known as Travel Time Tables from which he can read off the distance of the earthquake from the seismological observatory.

Let us proceed to find out the epicentre of the great Koyna earthquake of December 11, 1967 for example. The Koyna earthquake has not only been recorded by the dozen and odd seismological observatories in India but also by all the seismological observatories of the world. We shall satisfy ourselves with the data from Indian seismological observatories. To begin with although the earthquake has been recorded by the Central Seismological Observatory at Shillong the seismologist there does not know as to where the epicentre is. There is an arrangement by which all the seismological observatories in India are required to send technical information regarding earthquakes recorded by them not only to Shillong but to the headquarters of the seismological organisation in India which is located in Delhi under the India Meteorological Department. This information which is in code form gives among other data the interval between the P and S waves recorded at the Observatory, its intensity and time of recording of the P wave etc. It is then transmitted by high priority telegram or

teleprinter to Shillong and New Delhi. To start with, the Seismologist collects all the information from the different seismological observatories, and with the respective observatories as centres and their distances of earthquake as radii he draws large circles on a globe. It will easily be seen that two large circles will intersect at two points and the third circle will pass through only one of the two points of intersection in fact all the large circles drawn from the other sections will pass through this common point. This point, which is common to all the circles is the epicentre of the earthquake shock. The coordinates (latitude and longitude) of this point are then read off from the globe and communicated to the cooperating observatories and to the Press. The epicentre of the Koyna earthquake thus determined has been pinpointed at $18^{\circ} 1' N$ Lat and $76^{\circ} 11' E$ Long, 15 kms south of the Koyna dam.

In other words to determine the epicentre of the earthquake data from at least three seismological observatories fairly far apart (so that good points of intersections can be obtained) will be required. This is how the seismologist can locate the epicentres of earthquakes be they in the exposure of the large ocean or in the inaccessible places of mountainous regions of the world or in the wilderness of deserts. It goes without saying that the further the observatory is from the epicentre of the earthquake the greater is the time interval between the P and S waves of the earthquake.

Indian Earthquakes

The earliest earthquake which caused widespread destruction in India was the Great Calcutta Earthquake of October 11, 1737 when 300,000 people perished. A cyclone also shook Calcutta

EARTHQUAKES

on the same day and in all probability the casualty figures related to the earthquake and the cyclone put together.

The Great Assam Earthquake of June 12, 1907, which enabled great discoveries in seismology, is known as Oldham's Earthquake. It was R. D. Oldham, Director of the Geological Survey of India, Calcutta, who studied this earthquake in very great detail and found out a method for determining the epicentres of earthquakes. The earthquake was heralded with a terrible noise at 3.05 PM (Calcutta Local Time) 74.5 PM Madras Time and its vibration shook the earth for 1 minute and laid to ruins an area of 30,000 square miles around the epicentral area in the Shillong plateau. It was felt over an area of 1,75,000 square miles. Shillong, Golapuri, Gauhati, Nongst, Silhet, Dibrugarh and Chirapuri were devastated and the total death toll was under 7000, a comparatively low figure on account of the fact that the main area of destructivity was thinly populated then. If an earthquake of similar intensity were to occur again in the same area now, the death toll would have been at least 5 times greater. The earthquake was felt in Calcutta also but no damage was done.

This destructive earthquake (Magnitude 5.2) which had its epicentral tract on the Nepal-Bihar border occurred at 2.14 PM on January 15, 1934. A rumbling noise as if scores of horses were passing was heard just before the earthquake struck with its fury. The earthquake lasted for varying period from 10 to 5 minutes in different places. In the worst affected areas people could not stand up and were forced to sit or lie down. Large fissures opened in the ground and the ground sunk in several places. At the time of earthquake the ground rose and fell in waves 6 inches high. Hundreds of water spouts ap-

peared throwing up water and sand forming miniature volcanoes with water and sand spouting out of the craters to heights reaching 6 feet. Large standing crops of sugarcane were destroyed by the hot water and sand deposits.

The earthquake took a toll of 10,000 lives and the loss of property was very great. The poor villagers were paralysed with fear the biting cold of the mid winter adding to their misery. Monghyr town suffered the greatest damage followed by Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Darjeeling, Patna and even as far away as Calcutta. The earth-

epicentre was in the extreme north of Assam on the Assam-China border in an inaccessible area. Many cities in Assam, Bengal and Bihar felt the earthquake. Numerous after shocks were recorded over a period of 2 years. But the severest earthquake that shook Assam occurred on June 12, 1907.

Koyana Earthquake of December 11, 1967

The Koyana earthquake which had its epicentre near Koyana-nagar took a toll of 600 lives. It was a most unexpected earth-



Fig. 1. Photograph of a miniature 'land volcano,' hundred of which made their appearances after the disastrous Bihar earthquake of January 15, 1934.

quake was felt over an area of 1,00,000 square miles.

The most pathetic earthquake to be recorded in India was the great earthquake (Magnitude 7.5) of May 1, 1935, with its epicentre near Quetta which literally flung and the city of Quetta to the ground. People numbering 30,000 were killed and several thousand injured.

Assam Earthquake of August 15, 1950

The Assam earthquake known as the Independence Day Earthquake struck to an magnitude on August 15, 1950. Huge landslides occurred and the rivers Dihing and the Lohit changed their courses. The

quake as it occurred in the Deccan trap area considered to be the stablest region in the world. Seismologists and geologists had investigated and went deep into the problem as to whether the earthquake was caused by the impounding of water in the Koyana dam. The team of experts appointed by the UNESO came to the conclusion that the impounding of the water in the dam was not responsible for the earthquake and the earthquake had occurred as a natural event.

The last great earthquake to occur in India was in Andhra Pradesh with its epicentre located at 15° N. Lat. and 80° E. Long. Fortunately, there was no loss of life although some buildings had developed

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cracks. It was followed by a few after shocks.

Suppose an earthquake of great intensity, comparable to the great Koyana earthquake of December 11, 1967, were to occur under the seabed in the Bay of Bengal some three hundred miles south of Calcutta. What would be the death toll in Calcutta? Nil or negligible. But the tsunami or Seismic Sea Waves which follow usually all earthquakes in the sea or near the coasts will wipe out the entire population of Calcutta in less than an hour (God forbid!) from the time of occurrence of the earthquake, not to speak of the terrible damage to installations and property. This hypothetical example brings out the magnitude and destruction and loss of life via the associated tsunami. The tsunami can attain a height

of 100 feet or more and it comes rushing in with a velocity of 500 miles per hour. Nothing can stop it and the mighty wall of water will gain in height when it enters mouths of rivers like the Hooghly.

The Japanese are the worst sufferer from the tsunami. The ancient monuments along the coasts of Japan have the inscription 'When you feel an earthquake expect a tsunami.' At about 7.30 P.M. on June 15, 1890, an earthquake of great intensity which had its epicentre in the sea about 100 miles from the eastern coast of Japan and about 500 miles northeast of Tokyo shook the entire eastern seaboard of Japan. It was a festival day and the Japanese were busy celebrating it. Within 20 minutes of the feeling of the earthquake, a mighty wall of water nearly 100 feet high came rushing in and before the

unfortunate people knew what was happening, they were tossed about by the gushing sea water which drowned men, women and children. According to official estimates 25,320 people were drowned, 199, injured and 62,200 houses were destroyed in four coastal places. And yet not a single death was directly ascribed as due to the earthquake!

The earliest tsunami in Indian waters was the one associated with the disastrous Kutch earthquake of June 16, 1819. The earthquake claimed 1000 lives. Large tracts of land were filled with saltwater and many wells in the area turned saltish. The Sindh Fort and the surrounding area were converted into a large saltwater lake about 16 miles in

The other of tsunami in Indian waters was the one

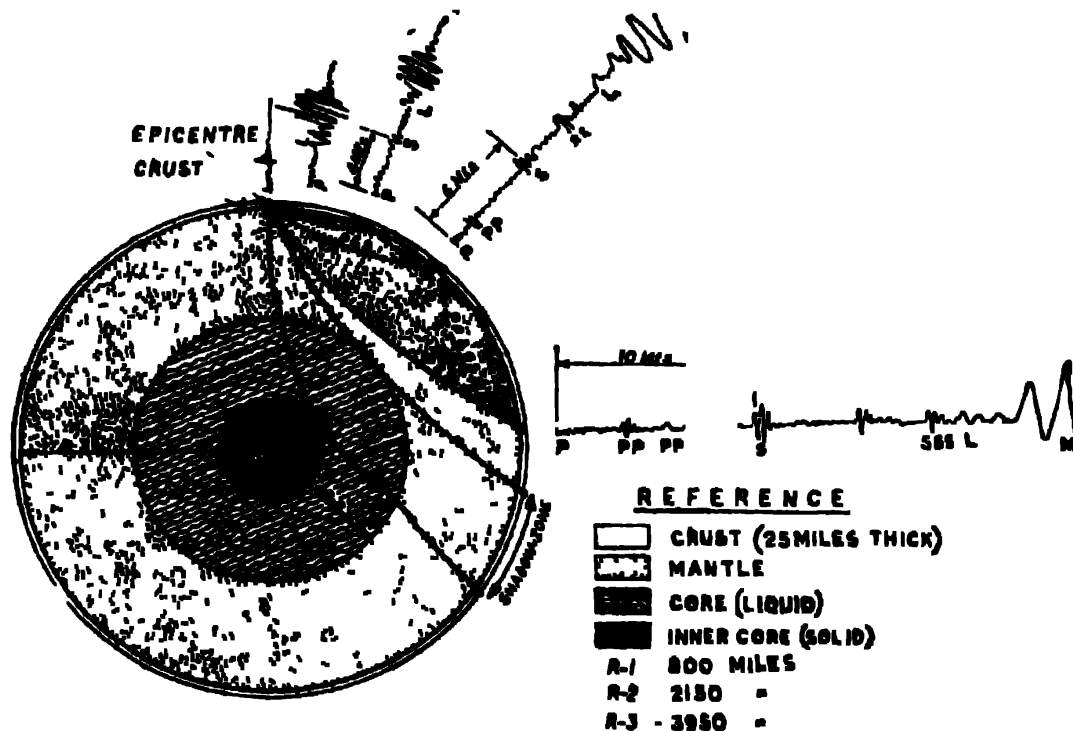


Fig 5. Diagram showing the internal constitution of the earth. The bending of the P wave and the absorption of the S wave resulting in the "shadow zone" led R. D. Oldham of the Geological Survey of India to the important discovery of the liquid core of the earth. The figure also shows the other layers and the different earthquake waves recorded at different distances.

EARTHQUAKES

generated by the great earthquake of November 28, 1947, with its epicentre near the Makran coast 250 miles west of Karachi. Serious loss of life and property was reported from Pakistan and Oman along the coast and tsunami was perceptibly felt at Karachi where loss of life, however, was minor. Bombay felt the tsunami at 5.15 AM when the country boats on the Juhu beach were tossed up and down. At Karwar on the west coast 1,000 miles from epicentre of the earthquake, the speeding tsunami filled the creeks and inlets and the boats anchored in the harbour were cut off from their moorings and drifted into the sea.

There is no possibility of big tsunamis in the Arabian Sea but

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The United States Administration (USNA) of the United States of America, which is one of the highest scientific bodies in the world, had convened a symposium on Earthquake Prediction in 1960 when the question of prediction of earthquakes was discussed in great detail by experts in the field. The conclusion was that it would be possible to predict earthquakes in the future, but when they admitted that they could not yet fully understand the mechanism of earthquakes. With the present day knowledge of earthquakes they concluded it would not be possible to predict earthquakes.

With modern electronic instruments capable of measuring

even very small displacements of the earth there is some hope of predicting earthquakes. It has been discovered that the electrical resistivity of the rock undergoes a rapid change before it snaps producing the earthquake. Further, it has been found out that this change takes place when the accumulated stress amounts about 50% of the final fracture figure for the rock. Although the cost would be prohibitive to install instruments to measure the electrical resistivity of rocks all over the world it would be practicable to install these in earthquake zone close to thickly populated areas to give advance warning, but it is too early to assess the success of this programme. In active research is going on in Japan and it is a vital problem for them. And the USA for the prediction of earthquakes and let us hope that some tangible result will come out during the next 25 years at least.

It is curious fact that we know much more about the space above us than the constitution of our Earth on which we live. Whatever is known is mostly inferred from the behaviour of the earthquake waves.

It was from P. D. Oldham who applied his brilliant mind to this subject discovered that P and S waves were neither recorded nor felt in the distance range from 200 to 900 miles from the epicentral region. He concluded that there must be some dense matter inside the earth which deflected the earthquake waves or deflected them. He concluded that only liquid would have this property and announced that the earth had a molten iron core 1,500 miles thick which would account for the absence of the P and S waves he had observed by studying different seismograms from all parts of the world. This region was then called the Shadow Zone.

Laboratory experiments have shown that P waves, which are longitudinal not only get deflected when they pass through a liquid medium but lose much of their velocity. S waves are almost completely absorbed by the liquid. The late arrival of the P waves over larger distances and the absence of the S waves led to the epoch making discovery of the liquid molten core of the earth.

In recent years a few feeble waves of the L type were discovered in the so-called shadow zone by Byerly of the USA and Miss Lehmann of Denmark, who came to the conclusion that there must be a solid core within the liquid core. The suggestion when made was astounding but Sir Harold Jeffreys of the United Kingdom and Prof. Bullen of Australia both well-known seismologists confirmed the possible existence of the solid core and estimated its radius to be of the order of 800 miles.

The outermost layer of the earth called the crust consisting of soil, clay, granite, rock etc. is about 40 kms (25 miles) thick and tectonic earthquakes originate within this crust. The layer below the crust is known as the mantle which is believed to consist of a rock called dunite which is mostly ferro-silicon. The mantle is 1,500 miles thick and it is known that there are layers of different densities in the mantle. The molten rock known as olivine which is ejected from volcanoes during eruptions is almost similar to dunite, since volcanoes have their roots in the mantle. So it is reasonable to conclude that at least one of the constituents of the mantle is ferro-silicon material. The liquid core of the molten iron is 1,500 miles thick and the constitution of the innermost solid core of 800 miles' thickness cannot be determined with any certainty.

THE EVOLUTION OF YATRA FOLK-DRAMA

‘YATRA,’ or to be more precise, the folk-drama once ruled the entertainment sphere of India, particularly in Bengal. The exact time of the birth of Yatra-play is still debatable though much has been written and discussed about it in this country and outside of it. The time of Yatra's birth could not be determined for all practical purposes. But going through conflicting views over this issue and by applying the process of elimination we come across two distinct opinions about the birth of Yatra-play. A group of critics hold the view that Yatra appeared in India before the birth of Christ and invariably the ingredients of these folk-dramas were collected from the life of Lord Srikrishna. And so it was called ‘Krishnayatra’. This trend of Yatra according to these critics, found its foothold in Bengal through Jaydeb's ‘Gitogobinda’. But the other group of critics differ. The Yatra, according to them

took its birth due to the influence of specific type of folk-songs Panchali in medieval Bengal. The Panchali at that time was the main item of entertainment which held its grip over the people of Bengal. The Panchali in fact was a number of songs composed on the base of mythological themes. It cannot be denied that the other forms of entertain-

SRI BHASKAR

ment like Kathakata, Farji, Kutim etc. that appeared in Bengal, were offshoots of the Panchali or to be more precise Panchali played a great role in introducing the other forms of entertainment akin to it. So, we may not be wrong if we accept the view that Panchali was greatly responsible for the birth of Yatra in Bengal.

The term ‘Yatra’ is a Sanskrit word which means a festival. And

there were festivals like ‘Rasvati, Dolyatra, Himoolvatra’ etc. One may mark that all these festivals were related to the Krishna cult. When the cult of Vaishnavism became a potent spiritual force in Bengal the folk-play ‘Krishnayatra’ tailed with a great fanfare. And this type of entertainment proved to be very popular. Gradually it was followed by ‘Janyatra, Chandiyatra, Bhasanyatra’ etc. The ingredients of Ramayatra were taken from the epic Ramayana materials of ‘Chandiyatra’ were collected from Hindu (Sakti) Scriptures. ‘Chandi’ and the story of Kichula was adapted for Bhasanyatra. The Yatra resembled the Mystery and Miracles play of medieval Europe.

In the early days of Yatra Mythology and Hindu Scriptures supplied the materials of Yatra-play. The Yatra lost its charm at the appearance of stage-plays in Bengal, but though it lost its foothold in the cities, it held its

THE EVOLUTION OF YATRA OR FOLK-DRAMA

sway over rural Bengal. As I said earlier, Yatra was more or less an offshoot of the Panchali, so also the stage-play in Bengal was an offshoot of Yatra. Though the Western mode of stage-play wielded a great influence in shaping the Bengali stage-play, it cannot be rejected that our indigenous form of entertainment, Yatra, was partly responsible for the birth of stage-play in Bengal.

The music was the main feature in the early days of Yatra. Dialogues had virtually no place in it. The story was told through a number of successive songs. The songs in fact carried the story, and it advanced step by step till it reached its logical end.

Due to the influence of Bharat Chaudhuri and the changed outlook of society

so long dominated by the religion, the dialogue at last found a place in the Yatra play, along with the music resulting in the upsurge of Yatra like Kalayadamar by Paramananda Adhikary. So the Yatra, replenished with dramatic action and dialogue, became very popular. Yatra after the new pattern was written based on the stories of Andha Karna and Nala Damayanti. They were called new Yatras. Among the pioneers Gopal Upreti carried a great fame for his literary songs. Then another type of Yatra, the Nipat-Nipatani, known as Bhauri, appeared with a crud form of drama, crude and indecent, on the bordering on the verge of obscenity. The educated class of Bengal could not welcome this type of Yatra and gradually

it lost its foothold in Bengal despite the attempts of Krishnakamal Goswami who endeavoured to check this downward trend by writing three Yatra plays built on the theme of Radha Krishna. But his attempt to bring back the traditional form of Yatra failed. And the final blow came from the stage plays newly introduced at that time after the Western technique by the amateur class. After the introduction of the professional stage in Bengal the Yatra lived a precarious life.

The traditional form of Yatra after going through several processes of evolution was a sort of costume play in its open air.

The songs and stories were related to Puranas, Epic and Hindu Scriptures. Besides playlets,



1. Typical Yatra

(Radha Krishna)

THE EVOLUTION OF YATRA OR FOLK-DRAMA

there were two 'Yuris' or the special singers in a Yatra play. They were usually helped by two Violin players. These four musicians helped the Yatra artists by singing background songs blended with music. This was the position in the mid nineteenth century. In this context the name of Mukunda Das must be mentioned. His Yatra-play built on robust patriotic songs inspired millions of people in Bengal.

With the advent of movies, the Yatra almost disappeared from the cities and its activities were con-

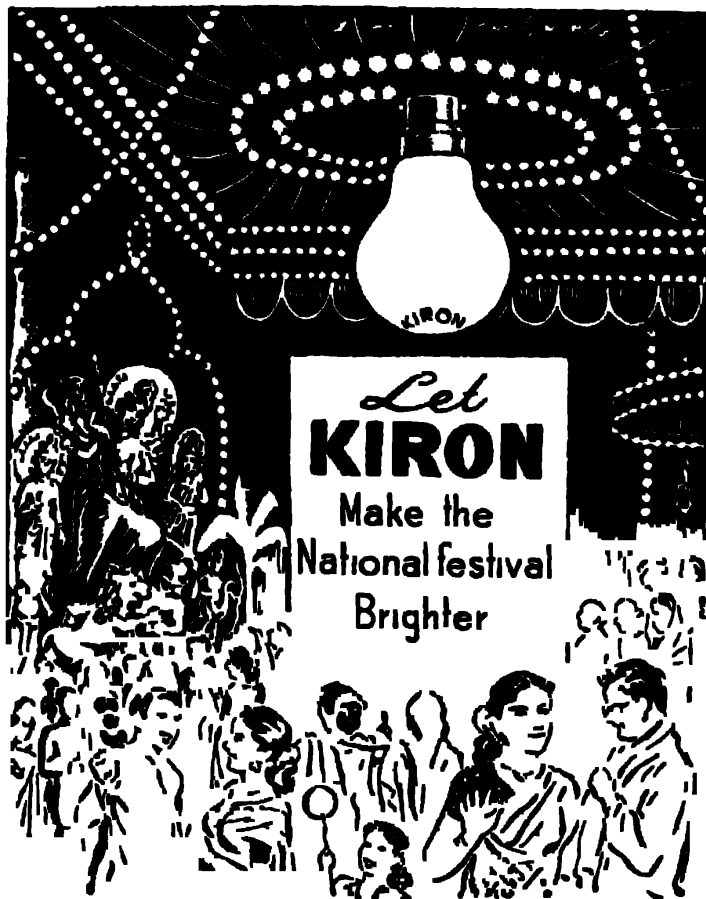
fined strictly to the rural areas. It also lost its ground in the rural area and by the time the Second World War broke out 'Yatra' lost its popularity completely.

After the Second World War 'Yatra' so long cornered by the movies and stage-plays, reappeared with a new face. Stories based on biography of great men, detective stories, adventures found place in Yatra—which could not be dreamt of in the earlier days. Even the struggle of the proletariat was introduced in the Yatra plays for example, 'Kajal-

Rammohun" 'Michael Madhusudan', 'Hitler' 'Phasi Manchey', 'Rikshawalla' etc may be cited here.

The changed race of Yatra presented also a changed technique—the traditional ideas were replaced by new innovations which were partly taken from the stage and the cinema. Conservative critics may decry these, but it cannot be denied that the new face of Yatra has been acclaimed by the audience. The proof of this assumption lies in the fact that not only in the rural areas but also in a city like Calcutta the altered form of Yatra has become very popular. Many of the talents of the Bengali stage have joined the Yatra parties on very lucrative terms beyond their expectations. And how could it be possible for the bosses of the Yatra parties to give such fancy terms and condition unless they are assured of netting good revenues through their show?

With the change of time the taste of the audience is bound to be off the beaten track. So, the changed trend of Yatra-play must be welcomed for the sake of Yatra itself. But in this process of change one should not discard the main factor of Yatra—I mean the musical part of it. There is a tendency to introduce heavy dramatic element at the cost of music. This unbalanced form of Yatra is apt to mar the beauty of this kind of play—After all we should not forget that folk songs were once the main source of a Yatra-play in the early days.





A portrait of Ghalib from second edition of his collection of Persian poems published in 1862-67

I T WAS a morning in the middle of the nineteenth century. A palanquin stopped outside of an English nobleman's residence in Delhi. A majestic looking nobleman stepped out of it and advanced towards the gate. A flowing robe trailing out behind him, a stunted and surly beard in the background of a redish white complexion added dignity to his port. He advanced a few steps joyfully but soon his face turned into a frown. He stood waited a few moments and then suddenly returned the palanquin which hurriedly disappeared with him.

The morning the white secretary of Delhi College was expecting this nobleman. The latter had been offered the position of Professor of Persian in his College and was to

Mirza Ghalib

SATYA GANGOPADHYAY

discuss terms of appointment. As he failed to turn up the secretary made a query and asked the reason of his not turning up. Soon came the reply. I had agreed to join the college as I thought it would enhance my prestige.

I the prestige of my family. Normally, if I would go to see you there would be people to receive me. But as I agreed to take up an appointment in the college, not a soul was at the gate.

This was Mirza Ghalib, one of the best and decidedly the most well known Urdu poet of the Indian sub continent. Sensitive like any other poet, his sense of dignity was even greater because of his noble descent. In 1797 he was born in a warrior family of Agra. Though he digressed to literature, he carried his fighting spirit with him all through his life. And this was in spite of the fact that he toiled under abject poverty, his bill of debt on wine alone once touching the dizzy figure of Rs. 30,000. Yet in his writings his poverty can very seldom be traced excepting only on a few occasions when possibly he could bear no more. He lived in an unhappy home presided over by a corpulent and sharp tongued wife who gave birth to quite a few children, none of whom survived rendering the household even more bleak. On one such occasion he wrote in despair

Ghalib Oqchkar ko do shah ko dom
Oqchkar gave ke jahle the nokar
nirah hum mar

A pensioner you are Ghalib God's grace
For the nobles sake. Come on the days
when you said I am not a slave

MIRZA GHALIB

On another occasion he had to descend to even a more abject depth when he prayed for a monthly pension to the king and concluded his poem with a sycophantic couplet aimed at tilting the prospective benefactor towards him. He wrote

*Being your servant naked shall I go ?
For my subsistence shall daily borrow ?
Pay me money month by month
That life may not unbearable grow
Seeking blessings writing I stop,
I have no trick with poetic show
May you prosper a thousand years
Fifty thousand days in a year may flow*

Much of Ghalib's woe was due to his preference for frequent and quality wine. In a couplet he wrote

*Wine I have forsaken
Only at times I sip
It in the day, there is cloud or at night
the moon do I sip*

Yet much credence cannot be given to his words because he himself in another couplet gave us the cue

*I listened to your Sufi faith
And your comments I heard
I'd take you to be a Wali
Were you not a drunkard ?
Again a self critic as he was he writes
You swear Ghalib that wine you would
not touch
Credence must be given to your
swears as such*

Of course he has offered an explanation for his addiction to wine which makes us prone to condone his fault

*Wine the black-faced seek for frolic's
solace*

I want to forget so wine I take

The reason of the addiction is not far to seek. Who does not know Ghalib asks that

*However the learned talks
And self glorification sought
Nothing really is absorbing
Without wine and pot*

His not-Bihadur Shah Zafar, the patron of Ghalib, also extolled the efficacy of drink. Zafar, the last Mughal emperor of Delhi whose court Ghalib adorned along with another giant of Urdu poetry, Iqbal, wrote

*The companion of the green heart friends
and wine's taste—*

*They are the essence of life, and headaches
are the rest*

The frequent reference to wine in Urdu literature is the legacy of Persian from which it descended. Ghalib was well-known for his addiction to drinks but Zafar was not. Yet wine is not infrequently found in his couplets. It is mere a style than a preference of the individual poets.

Urdu literature has been described as a legacy of the Mughals. Dr V D Mahajan in his *India since 1526* writes

"Another legacy of the Mughals is the growth of the Urdu language. This was the outcome of the contact between the Muslims and the Hindus. Although it was not patronised by the Muslim Emperors who used Persian as the court language, it made a lot of progress during the Mughal period."

With the inheritance of the language, inheritance of ideas also followed. Thus we find that Saqi (the young woman who serves wine), wine, wine-pot and the goblet appear repeatedly in Urdu poetry as they did in the quatrains of Omar Khayyam and then commentators. The poet reclining under the shade of a tree with the wine jar and goblet and the Saqi beside ready to assist this is a well known attitude depicted by Umar. Compare with it the following couplets of Zafar, a comparatively austere one in the nobility

*Kinaar ab ho mehtab ho sagar ho,
meena ho
Jo ch samai kul ho fir to chahalen ho
tamasha ho
Oh hou telon k uchal men akele uor
man jo pahunchen
Zafar kha kha nah gul ho fir to chha
hale khou tamasha ho*

"The river bank and the moon in the sky,
the wine jar and pot nearby if all these are
there then who can the mirth restrain ?

In a banana cluster alone she would stay,
and to present there shall I not delay. What
row would be there and then who can the
mirth restrain ?"

Though poverty dogged Ghalib all through his life wine he did not forsake nor his pride. Like any man of consideration he was conscious of his position in the society and in several couplets he gave vent to his feeling. But an affable and likeable man as he was with his very strong sense of humour which characterises one of the main features of his life, his comments never pinch. In several couplets he explains his attitude to life. In one he says

*Firly I move, Sulah Kul' admit,
Surely no one with enmity I treat*

MIRZA GHALIB

Again his religious toleration is surprisingly evident in several couplets one of which says

More but khannemen to ksbemen garo
Brahmarik
In unfalt i o t s he s e e c f
rel g i l e
At Kabir h i t Bial s n / i t e
te p l e l e d e

Himself a Muslim living under the shade
of a Muslim ruler's patronage he did not
hesitate to talk lightly about Rza

Who has food at home
Breaking Ro at eat
Surely keep g Ro a
For him is proper and fit
Breaks g Ro at t e
If food th s
W t h o i k e f R
A t e l l e d

And he b ad t l a d s p e
itself leavely in he t l l g a z a l

How t l l t r e
May
I t e s t f t d
S i t t f l i d e d d
S p u s f l k a
If com n t d t l e f r u l t r m t
Who is t l e t h a t d o s t e a r n ?
W l a p l e

Chal b b e a d n n i e l s l a n o s
l e r a s e b i l h i l l l p a
a e l y t a o d t N
t h p a ()
l a l l l l
l a e d a l e b l l
l i h e l a t e l s l o l l l
N t t l e l r l u t l f
l g l t g l o l l l e t k
t e w i e r d j u d g u g
T l e t r k e r s p l u c k

In another his self eulogy and self-criticism are found to co-exist

I e e h t k u
A n d t h e h i d s
H o n a l t b r
S r t h a c l b i
b t t l e

A similar and equally fitting couplet poses a bashful question. The poet asks his friends what would he say in reply when some one innocently asked who Ghalib was

He ask who is Ghalib pray
• Tell me son of e what shall I say

I u h i r k a n n o h k e G h a l i b k a o n h a t
K a b l a o k e l i m b a l t a s k e n

Though pride and wine did not forsake
him all through his life at times the pondency
e x k h i m a n d h e l e t p l e t s r e p l e t e
i t h h e a n y t h a t u e t l t s n l a l i n e s
t l v g t n h e p e o f a n t h e i n t s t a t e
p e M i h a e l M a t h i s i d s l a l s o
c t a l l l h e t h l p t l t e l m e
t l e p l e C h a l b n i e a t l e p a t e r v
e e x p t l e l e l b n s k a l i l e
i d l e c t n e c y h i j a t i o n t h e
p a r t i c i p a t e d t l c o u p l e s t l i b e w a s
c l i g e n t c o n e j n t s u c h a s a b j e c t d e p t h
I n t l m m e n t s o f d e s p a i r a n d d e p e n d e n c y
h e t o t e

f o t l e k a r a t
l
W o n
D e l

H e l l l l h l l e n t s h o
t e l a j a l l l l l t a l t e a p
t n l a l l a l a l h a p a t h o f
t l l h e l e t i n f l u e n c e
u n l l s

D l l e l r l l d
T l l f o l l e d l d
W l a t d l l
A l p l t l h e
l o c l b h e
t

H n t l r l l t a l e a p e n o n e r
a d h l l b e l
A r a c l b c l g a e
t l l l l l a s
A l l y e l e h t s
l l l l l d a l l p m l l l a l i m a n
l e k l l e l a l l p m l l l a l i m a n
u a h c e a l l l s

Z i n b s a l u
c l l
H n b b z z d b k h d a
l f
l b l l f p s
t d l l t l

B t l h a t x l e s
o l l f h l l l l l a p
e l l h r l a l l s u l d
s a y

S e l a r c m
A l l t r o u g h t h e r i g h t a d d
S o n t l i g h t o t h e r h a p t e m u t
N e e d n o t f e a r
K a t d i n g a r d u h m e n h i e a m

MIRZA GHALIB

*Hota rahga kuchchnah kuchch,
ghabraen kia?*

He himself admitted that for him a cupful of wine was sufficient to bring forth five works of words from him. Wine and goblet in my front someone hold, how I release five works of words then behold.

For him wine is what matters and not how it is served. So he addresses Sup and pleads that wine may not be withdrawn from him.

*If you dispense up I'll
Drink from palms of mine
If cup you do not provide,
Do not withdraw wine.*

In Ghalib's compliment to wine Calcutta finds a place. Ghalib inherited some property but felt he was deprived of his rightful share. In a letter written to a friend Ghalib gave an account of this as also of his pensions received from different sources. Pindar Muno-karal Jassi has quoted this letter in his book *Guldasta Adib*. The letter says:

When I was five I lost my father and at nine the uncle I was decided to give ten thousand rupees annually in exchange for his (uncle's) estate to me and to my rightful co-shares including the estate of Nawab Ahmed Balah Khan. But only three thousand rupees was given instead in which was included my own share of seven hundred and fifty rupees. I informed the British Government of this embezzlement and Mr. Colebrooke, Resident of Delhi and Mr. Sterling, Secretary to the Government at Calcutta, agreed to return to me my share. But the Resident retired from service and the Secretary died some time later. The Shah of Delhi sanctioned Rs. 50 per month. His successor died ten years later. An amount of Rs. 700 was sanctioned by the court of Wazir Ali Shah of Oudh in exchange for an eulogy written for him. He too did

not survive more than two years that is to say, though he still is alive his Kingdom has passed into other hands. His kingdom saw its end in two years only. The estate of Delhi had a stronger heart. So it saw its end after providing subsistence for me for seven years. Where could you find an unfortunate fellow like myself who is not even granted the opportunity of remaining grateful to others.

Ghalib visited Calcutta in the third decade of 19th century to plead his case before the authorities in the city. He remained here for several months but his mission failed and the poet returned to Delhi. This brief stay in Calcutta convinced him of the supremacy of the British power and he gave vent to this feeling later in his writings. Fortunately for us in a letter written to a friend Ghalib praised some of the things he saw in the city. Curiously enough in this little poem also Calcutta's wine found its place along with some other items which may interest the reader. The poem reads: As you mention Calcutta friend a dart into my bosom you send. Ah the planes and verdancies self adorning supply ladies whose glances patience test. Oh then get times strength arrest. Fruits there are fresh and sweet ah the wine there tasty and neat.

In a couplet Ghalib has given an explanation of his worldly worthlessness. He has said that it is due to love that he is worthless.

*Ishque Ghalib nekamma kardun
Wana ham bhi adun the kame ke
Love made me worthless Ghalib or
I too of worth was before.*

But we are not convinced. We have a feeling that if Ghalib was really worthless contribution of wine to his worthlessness was not less than that of love.

of his

other himself



AN ORIYA STORY

The Daughter-in-Law

FAKIRMOHAN SENAPATI

Translated by PADMALAYA DAS



RAMAHARI Patnaik had been an Inspector of Police and a well-known man at Gopinathpur village in Salepur *pargana*. People from about a dozen neighbouring villages hurried to him for advice whenever any problem arose. Members of the *panchayat* keenly awaited his arrival before beginning discussion of a subject. For five years the Bahu stayed at home and received his pension. At the time of his death son Sibasundar was ten years old and daughter Champa Devi five.

Widowed Bimla Devi was a kind-hearted easy-going simple person. Now in her great sorrow, she turned into an efficient domestic manager. She looked after the two children and maintained the house. What with bribes and such extras over and above his pay, Ramahari Bahu had had a fairly good income. But, as he had been a great spendthrift, he died empty-handed. Bimla Devi had secretly saved a fair amount of money, with this sum as well as by selling her few ornaments, she was

able to meet the household expense. Scrimping and cutting down on other expenditure, he spent everything on her son's education. She always said, Let him learn his letters. If he is any virtue, why then tomorrow he will set up his own home!

Daughter Champa was quite good looking. Her nose was as pointed as a sword's edge. She had large liquid black eyes. The curl on her brow and her teeth became her beautiful too well. Her complexion seemed as if *kumkum* had been rubbed on her body. Her virtues were on a par with her looks. She had learnt from her mother how to cook and serve meals properly. As for her other qualities there was nothing you could find fault with. Brother Sibhu had fondly given her a few lessons in reading and writing. In the evening when she had no work to do she sat by her mother and sang *Krupa-sindhu Badana* and other songs from the *chhandu* collection.

Sibhu Bahu worked as a clerk in the *cutchery*. Since the day of his appointment, he had wanted to

employ a young boy as a cook for a modest sum so that his mother could live somewhat comfortably. But on learning about it, Bimla Devi resisted vehemently. On boiling half a seer of rice the job was done!—After all how much did the child earn that another item of expenditure should be added?

Days were flowing past like water. On the sixth day of the approaching month of Margashira Champa would complete twelve and enter her thirteenth year. As it was an even number, marriage was prohibited during the fourteenth year. Therefore, it must take place in the current year. Even though they were of the Karan caste keeping the daughter in the house till an advanced age was a rather shameful thing. The family was respectable, the girl had signs of good fortune, so proposals had been received from good families. Bimla Devi promptly refused every one of them. However hard anyone tried to persuade her, she stubbornly said "No!"

One evening Bimla Devi related Aunt Ani and Sibhu

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Babu beside her and spoke out her mind "Look, Aunt, when the son-in-law takes the daughter away, she departs, when lama takes her, she dies. On finding a rich family, I will send my daughter off to some distant place and will not see her again easily. I have two eyes, if I lose one, I will become one-eyed and die. I will give her so close-by that, when I call out to her, she will answer me. Well that's one hurdle. The important thing is, I will not violate my plighted troth. The Babus and *Baula* have gone to heaven and I am still struggling in hell. If I break my promise, I will not have room even in hell."

Four houses away from Ramahari Babu's residence had lived neighbour Nabaghana Das, a police head constable. For a long time the two had worked together at the same police station. Nabaghana Babu's family had consisted of wife Kamla Dei and son Dibakar. Just as the two Babus were great friends and were of one mind so also on the domestic front. Bimla Dei and Kamla Dei were deeply attached to each other and agreed about everything. When they were young, the two used to sit together for nearly an hour every morning on the bank of the pond behind their back-yard and brush their teeth. There they would talk of their joys and sorrows, of amusing and funny things, of culinary and house-keeping matters. On Dol Purnima day, they both became *bawlas* (i.e., on the vernal full moon day they both formally established friendship by exchanging mango buds and vowing to

call each other *bawla* or 'mango bud').

When Bimla Dei was carrying Champa, Kamla Dei had said, "*Bawla*, if you give birth to a daughter, you will give her to my Dibu."

Bimla Dei said, "Yes, *Bawla*, I will do so."

Kamla Dei—"Promise?"

Bimla—"Promise."

Kamla—"Promise?"

Bimla—"Promise."

Kamla Dei—"Promise?"

Bimla—"I do promise."

After taking an oath thrice, could anything more be said? Nabaghana Babu and Kamla Dei were no more. Then son Dibakar was the only one in the house. A worthy boy he knew a little English also, was young and handsome, and was the head revenue officer of the Kakatpur zamindar's office. Bimla Dei had that promise engraved on her heart. She said "I won't break my promise. I will settle that orphan child comfortably."

The marriage was over. Dibakar and Champa lived together in supreme happiness.

Now mother Bimla Dei wilfully demanded that a daughter-in-law be brought to the house.

One day—it was a Sunday—the *cutchery* was closed, and the son was at home. Sibu Babu was sitting and reading a book. The old lady slowly went and sat by his side. Coaxingly she began, "Are son Sibu, it is five years now since I've been going on at you. How many times have I told you? You did not listen. At first you said you would marry after finishing your studies. Your studies were finished. Then again you obstinately insisted you would marry after getting a job. You

got your job too. But where, even the term 'marriage' doesn't come up! Am I getting stronger or any younger? Will I be capable of doing these tasks any longer? Bida's mother does only the outside tasks and leaves, but who will do the inside ones and the cooking? Soon after dusk, I will be unable to see anything, will stumble and fall many a time and cannot even begin to do the work. On days when I feel unwell, Champa comes and boils a few things and goes, but will she be coming every day? And, look the house has three courtyards. I lie in a corner somewhere. When you leave for the *cutchery*, the rooms somehow seem fearfully empty. What had this house been and what has it come to? *Har-e-ha!* How much longer shall I live, son? Well, look at me a little! He is no more, otherwise would you have remained unmarried till today?" The old lady couldn't say anything further; she sobbed bitterly, clearing her nose loudly in between.

On seeing his mother's grief, Sibu Babu felt very sorry. Leaving his book on the table, he went over to Grandmother Ani's house. Granny Ani was a distantly related cousin of Bimla Dei's father. She had brought up Sibu and Champa at her knee. Bimla Dei respected her as a mother. Ani also regarded Bimla Dei as a daughter, was fond of her and helped her in every way. Ani's and Bimla Dei's houses had a common wall but different doorways. We don't know Granny Ani's family tree, so we are unable to name her ancestors. The grandmother and

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grandson talked a great deal on the subject of marriage. Granny said, "All right, Sibu, I will get you a beautiful bride. The only thing left is to dress her in a Maniabandha sari" (a beautiful hand-woven cotton sari).

In her younger days Granny Ani had been a very quarrelsome person. But she was also eager to aid others and make friends. Moreover she was quite capable of devising a skilful stratagem whenever the assistance of a clever woman was required. What if she was a widowed woman, the village folk sought her advice whenever something went wrong. Now Granny had grown very old. Tapping her stick she started out.

From the front door itself she began calling out, "Re Bimla! Re Wa Bimla!" Calling repeatedly she went and sat by the side of her niece. After talking of this and that she said, "Re Wa! Sibu has said he will marry. Yes, she must be a girl from a good family and must know how to read and write. If he gets such a bride, he will marry."

Another condition of Sibu Babu's was that the girl should be good-looking, but Granny did not mention this to her niece. Wh. Sibu Babu alone who did not want a beautiful bride. Well let the readers themselves say if this is untrue!

Bimla Dei delightedly embraced her aunt and said, "Aunty, you bestir yourself a bit. Whom else have I? Who will trouble himself for the fatherless one? It is only son-in-law who will do something. You know I can't tell him. You go and speak to him to

please seek and catch and settle everything. I will ask Champa also to speak to son-in-law. Anyway that one is still a child. She won't know how to talk so you go and put it to him in a nice manner and make him understand."

Dibu Babu was now in great trouble. Champa was after him all the time.

"Please arrange a bride for my brother." Returning home from somewhere,

proposal got going. In Dumdumput—the girl was of marriageable age, the daughter of a widow, she was in her seventeenth year. Her elder brother Baham Das was the village school master.

(On hearing all the proposals Sibu Babu used to be a little hesitant. Who does not want that the girl should be a rich man's daughter and be beautiful? But does it befall to everyone's lot? — You know,



She sat by her mother and sang

Dibu Babu would have hardly stepped inside before Champa ran up and asked, "What have you arranged a bride?" "What do you mean? Does a bride lie around in the open field that one has only to run and fetch her?"

Champa stuck to it like a leech.

Dibu Babu was a zamindar's head revenue officer. He knew all the mossful news. He sent word to several places. People from both parties went back and forth. The proposals were not suitable. Negotiations were broken off. At last a

marriage is ordained by Prapatti. Who can break his engagement? The girl will perforce marry the man predestined for her.

Sibu Babu looked around, but there was no one suitable. Meanwhile his mother was getting impatient. What could he do but agree?

Bimla Dei's joy knew no bounds. To a hungry person even a little boiled-rice water was nectar. She had been repeating daughter-in-law, daughter-in-law, like a hymn. A daughter-in-law had been found. What more?

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"Champa thought to herself, "A capable *bahu* will come and at once enter the kitchen. It's good mother will be relieved."

Dibu Babu brought news the bride's complexion was slightly dark, name—Nima. Why such a harsh name?—about this also there was information. Before the girl was born two elder brothers had died one after another. The mother saw that the girl was pretty, and was afraid Yama had taken away two older sons who had been handsome supposing he takes this girl is well! She named her 'Neem' *neem* is very bitter, Yama will not relish it.

Leave aside these things. Sibu married Nima. With great joy and affection, the mother-in-law received the daughter-in-law into the house.

The bride had come but newly to the house. How could any one suddenly ask her to do this and that? Covered up properly, she used to remain in a room. After finishing her early morning chores Champa would come and awaken her sister-in-law. She took her along to bathe and brought her back. Bimla Dei cooked and served them rice. After eating, the daughter-in-law washed her hands and went and slept. Bida's mother came and washed the used dishes.

Fifteen days went by, one month passed, even two months passed. But where? The daughter-in-law never even stirred out of her windowless room. She did not do any work.

Champa had already said quite a few times, "*Bahu* why do you simply lie in bed? Get up and start

doing some work. Go and cook and serve!"

The daughter-in-law disregarded this. She pretended she hadn't heard, and never said a word. She thought to herself, "What! Mother told me that my husband is the bread winner and I am the mistress of this house. These people will eat in my house so, of course, they must work. Why should I labour like a slave?"

She remembered well the advice her mother had given her. Her mother had said, "Don't look your mother-in-law in the face while talking. Make signs to her."

While eating if she needed another helping of rice or curry, she beat a vessel on the mud floor as a sign. She could not stand hunger. If the mother-in-law was a little late in cooking the rice she went into the kitchen and saying *hmm hmm* rubbed her stomach with her hand as a sign. Even Bimla Dei could make out that the poor daughter-in-law was famished.

Champa could not tolerate this any longer. She started scolding the *bahu*. How much could the daughter-in-law too tolerate? Why should she? After all she was the mistress of the house! At first she used to mutter to her self angrily. Now she was outspoken in her replies.

One day Champa got very angry and rebuked her. The daughter-in-law also started scolding back. Bimla Dei ran up and said, "Don't, *Ma Champa*! The child is sad because she has left her mother. She will, of course, do all the work later on. Once the drum is slung from her shoulders,

she will automatically beat it."

Champa said, "No, mother! Leave alone a drum! The *bahu* I see before me is not the type to sit even if the husking machine was on her shoulders!"

One day Granny Ani asked her grand-daughter, "O Champa! You have spoken to the *bahu* so often. Now she must be up and about her work, isn't it?"

Champa said, "No, O Granny! However hard you may polish, it's the same old half-burnt stick!"

If there was a slight delay in cooking and serving, or any other matter, the daughter-in-law began shouting at her mother-in-law. However, she had not forgotten her mother's words. She did not look at her mother-in-law's face while scolding. Turning her back towards her and with the veil in place, she went on rebuking angrily.

The daughter-in-law had such a talent but Sibu Babu had no idea about it. Mother, of course, would not say anything. Champa too said nothing. But then couldn't the Babu understand domestic matters? Even though he might not have heard all, he could figure out certain things. It was beyond Champa now. It was imperative to tell mother everything. But if she told it at home mother would hurry up and close her mouth and not permit her to speak out everything.

One evening, in Granny Ani's courtyard, the trio—grandson, grand-daughter and granny—sat for quite a long time and discussed something. That is to say in decent language it would be written that a

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committee sat. They talked so quietly that no one could make out any thing. Finally Sibb Babu said, that is, a resolution was passed. 'Look Champa' From next day till Monday the *cuthery* will be closed on account of Good Friday. Within that period we shall set everything right."

It was Friday. Son-in-law Dibu Babu had left early in the morning for the Kakatpur zamindar's house. He wouldn't be back for two days. Champa locked up her house and went over to her mother's place. Her brother had been sitting on the verandah. On seeing Champa he laughed a little and went out.

Champa went straight to her sister-in-law's bedside. She was wide awake but was lying in bed and rolling about from side to side.

Champa appealed to him, came highly incensed and roared 'O! You bahu! You eat a bellyful like a crocodile and lie in bed and roll from side to side! Who do you think will do the house work? What have you brought a maid-servant with you!'

Isn't there a limit to endurance? The daughter-in-law was bad-tempered by nature, moreover she believed that she was the mistress of the house, and these were nobodies. 'An' this one will come and wold?' She jumped out of bed angrily. There was time to adjust her sari. Her hair was loose. She at once started screaming, "Fema slave! Incendiary! Go out! I am, of course, the mistress, who are you?"

She went on reviling him repeating the same thing over and over again. Meanwhile Champa left laughing, and, snatching

the broom from the mother's hand, started sweeping the house.

Bimla Dei knew nothing. She became worried on hearing sounds of quarrelling. She was terribly scared of quarrels and always left centres of strife. She bolted the front door if someone quarrelled on the street. She was going to pacify the daughter-in-law, but Champa caught

The daughter-in-law's fire was aroused again, and she started abusing Champa.

Bimla Dei rushed up and said "Don't, Me, don't! Don't scold her. Her mother is not near her. If she hears she will weep!"

Champa said, 'Let her mother weep! Why didn't he kill her wretched laughter, instead of sending her here? I will kill this slave-woman with this



saying hnn hnn, she rubbed her stomach with her hand as a sign

her hand and pulled her away.

The daughter-in-law got tired after shouting so much and fell with a thud on her bed. At that moment Champa came smiling and appearing to be very angry, said "Where did that incendiary slave-woman go? I will beat her ten times on the head with the broom. That incendiary short-lived brother of hers! I will get hold of him and, counting every stroke, will hit him twenty times on the head with the broom."

broom. A very beautiful hide has been arranged. Today everything will be finalized."

Sibu Bahu was outside. He ran in and, taking hold of Champa's hand, began pulling her away. "Come, Champa, come. Let mother stay in the house with her golden daughter-in-law. We will both leave."

The two hid their faces in their clothes and smiled and went out. The old lady ran after them hastily, "Arre, you both don't get Arre Sibb, it is very late. Champa has put the rice to

THE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

boil Put something in your mouth before leaving!"

Sibu—"All right, you swear by this daughter that you won't say a word. Otherwise, we will leave the house without eating or drinking."

Bimla Dei—"I swear by my mother. I touch my eyes. I will not say anything."

From now on Bimla Dei dared not say anything for fear of her son and daughter. She kept wandering between house and back-yard. When the son and daughter were not present, she would peep in a little at her daughter-in-law's door.

Champa strained the water from the boiled rice and again went to the daughter-in-law's door. She started scolding once more. She found that the daughter-in-law no longer had the strength to get up. She was groaning, like a calf does when being branded with a hot iron.

Lying on her bed she had been doing some thinking. "Am I the mistle-ivy any more? The *naiind* is rebuking me so much and no one says a word for me. Moreover, the brother and sister are united. What is he going to marry another one? What will be my fate? Even mother-in-law is not coming near me! What shall I do?" Silently she lay in bed and listened attentively to the goings-on without.

At that moment Champa blew loudly on a conch. "Oh! You halber's wife! Go and get *dub* grass, jujube leaves, *chandari*, *sindur* and other articles and keep them arranged. Oh! Darbar's son! Dust and clean the big-room and place seats there and then the

water and other things ready. Is there any time left? What, will you do after the masters arrive (Loud sounds of a conch being blown.) *Arre Sham*. Keep the *mithai thali* on side. What did you say Radhika? The cat has eaten the cream from the curds? For shame! What will the masters have for tiffin?"

Champa finished cooking and served food to her brother and mother. Her mother said, "You eat something. And daughter-in-law—happening to glance at her son she got scared and added, "No! No! I am saying Champa alone will eat."

Sibu Babu said, "Yes, beware don't utter your daughter-in-law's name." Mother went towards the back-yard.

It was almost dusk. Granny Ani came carrying a stick and spoke loudly enough for the daughter-in-law to hear, "O! Champa! What is happening? Flower-garland *chandari* *sindur*—what are they for?"

Champa—"Don't you see, brother is going to marry another one? Today is the *mahaprasad* exchanging ceremony. (The guardians of the bride and bridegroom solemnise an engagement by exchanging the holy food offered to Jagannath of Puri.) There are sweetmeats and curds in that room you go and get some and eat. I have no time to serve you."

Loud sounds of a conch being blown simultaneously accompanied by *hula-huli* (shrill vibrating sounds made by a quick and constant movement of the tongue).

Granny—"All right, the new daughter-in-law will

come. What will this daughter-in-law do?"

Champa—"For shame! What sort of daughter-in-law is this? Brother had brought this one, so that she would do the housework and cooking. But this one does not do anything! What daughter-in-law is this?"

Granny—"Well, what will this daughter-in-law do?"

Champa—"What will she do? The left-overs from the other one's plate she will eat—and then wash it."

Granny—"All right, let me see the daughter-in-law a little."

Champa—"No! Oh Granny! No! No! Don't go near her! Let that one lie there and starve to death!"

Champa smiled and made some signs. "All right, all right, let me see her only once," saying this, Granny Ani went to the daughter-in-law. She promptly got up and held fast to the old lady's legs. She couldn't speak. Sobbing bitterly she said, *G-r-a-n-n-y t-e-l-l h-i-m n-o-t t-o m-a-r-r-y*."

Granny Ani—"Do you think he will listen to me? You, of course, will not do any housework—won't cook the rice—and quarrel on the slightest pretext! That is why another daughter-in-law is coming."

Daughter-in-law—"I w-i-l-l d-o e-v-e-r-y-t-h-i-n-g."

Granny Ani—"All right you tell that to Sibu. *Arre Sibu!* Come here and listen to what the daughter-in-law is saying."

Sibu—"No! No! I can't go."

Meanwhile the daughter-in-law held on to Granny Ani's legs with all her

might, almost, as if she would break them! For, at the moment, except for the lotus feet of Granny, Nima Dei had no other refuge in the world. Granny Ani called out loudly, "Arre Sibū, come! My legs are paining very much!"

As soon as Sibū Babu came, Granny Ani placed his legs in the *bōhu*'s charge and stood aside. The daughter-in-law held fast to her husband's legs. After all, he could go only if she freed them! The whole world was dark—'the lotus feet are my refuge'.

Granny Ani spoke in support of the daughter-in-law, "Arre Sibū! Henceforth the *bōhu* will do all the housework. You don't marry.

Sibū Babu said, 'But why doesn't she save so herself?'

On hearing this, the daughter-in-law had great hopes. Quickly she said, *hmm-hmm-mm-mm*.

Sibū Babu said, 'I don't understand *hmm-hmm-mm-nim*. Let her speak out every word clearly.' She gave clear replies to everything exactly as he said.

Then he said, 'Well, Granny, why did she pick up a quarrel with Champa? Let her rub her nose on the ground!'

There was no objection—the daughter-in-law rubbed her nose on the floor. Champa had been standing and laughing but she left at the time of the nose-rubbing. The daughter-in-law also rubbed her nose before the grandmother.

Sibū said, "Well, Granny, let her say these things before mother."

All went to mother. The daughter-in-law stated everything clearly. When she rubbed her nose on the

earth, the mother felt sorry and said, "Yes, that will do! The daughter-in-law will do everything." On Sibū Babu glaring at her, Bimla Dei said, "No! No!", and went off towards the backyard.

Sibū Babu said, "All right, let her now hold Champa's legs."

Champa ran up and embraced the daughter-in-law.



'Granny, tell him not to m-a-r-r-y'

and said 'No! No! After all she is my elder brother's wife and is like a mother to me. It is I who should fall at her feet.' She saluted and embraced her. The sisters-in-law both wept a little. Why did

Champa cry? But she did cry.

Champa dragged the daughter-in-law to the backyard. She rubbed half a bowl of oil on her, bathed and brought her back. She cooked food and served her brother and mother. The daughter-in-law was fasting, how could Champa eat? The sisters-in-law sat together and ate. The daughter-in-law drank a jugful of water and fell flat on the floor exhausted.

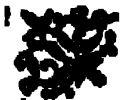
The next day, by the time crows began to caw, the daughter-in-law had finished all the early morning chores.

A little after sunrise, Champa came and found that all the early morning chores had been done. She was happy. Companionably both the sisters-in-law went to bathe.

At first, the daughter-in-law did not know how to cook. Now, since Champa taught her, she cooks quite well. If the mother-in-law picks up a broom or pan, the daughter-in-law snatches it from her hands. Moreover, for fear of her son and daughter, the old lady does not put her hand to any work. Remaining seated she gives instructions to the daughter-in-law.

Bimla Dei sits in one place and tells her beads day and night. If anybody happens to come from the village, he hears nothing but praise of the daughter-in-law. Twenty times a day all sorts of people hear only her praise. Twenty times a day, to all and sundry she says 'My daughter-in-law is indeed golden.'

* Fakirmohan Senapati (1893-1959) is the father of modern Oriya literature. This story first appeared in print in Oriya in June 1913.



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Cloth of Gold

BENARAS is one of the few cities whose reputation for unique achievements is fully justified. For not only is it a place of religious significance, but it is also the centre of one of the most fabulous of the textile industries of the country. Craftsmanship and drama go into the creation from the thread on the looms to the wardrobe of the wearer. There is behind the Benaras sari which finally bedecks midday a whole rich tradition. For it is the product of centuries of ritual and perfected skill.

The weavers of the exquisite textiles who are generally hereditary craftsmen might as often as not be living in the "colonies" which are a maze of tiny streets and houses specially for these craftsmen. Here, a whole family and even a joint family might live in a couple of rooms of one building — but one

room is monopolised by the looms, the lifeline of the weavers. These looms have usually been handed from one generation to the next and have changed but little in the last few decades. They hang on a cobweb of twisted threads from the low ceiling, and the wooden frames of the looms themselves are placed over pits dug into the ground. At one end of this pit sit a couple of a

KOBITA SARKAR

single weaver, and at the other another, who checks on the intricate design. The threads are stretched across the top and the weavers pass the shuttle back and forth their hands flying rhythmically with unerring movements, made smooth by time and practice. The wrong side of the cloth faces upwards and they often pass a mirror under the fabric to ensure

that there is no mistake in the actual weaving — and there rarely is!

The thread for the saris used to be of foreign origin, but the gold thread, the *kalabatur* as it is called, which gives the Benaras sari its distinctive quality, is as often as not made in western India in Surat and Ahmedabad as in Benaras itself. The dyes are usually synthetic. The colours however are dictated by tradition, though modified to suit prevailing fashion, and as is the case with weavers elsewhere also they dye their own threads according to the requirements of the piece they have in mind. The weaving of a sari may be a matter of a few days if it is a simple enough affair, or it may even take a year, if it is one of those intricate heavily designed traditional saris that are eventually destined to be the antiques of to-morrow.

Generally the weavers themselves prefer to do the lighter ones, for this means a quick & not a generous turnover, and is a better commercial proposition which in the circumstances is often necessary for them with their day-to-day method of living.

And what of the weavers themselves? They all serve a long and thorough apprenticeship. They begin working at an unimaginably early age — even children of five can be found doing minor jobs round the loom, and there is a tendency among the elders who have themselves undergone long practical training to be more than exacting with the young. Even after years of working in these damp, ill-ventilated rooms on the loom they themselves claim to be more novices! In the face of such modesty it is inevitable that they graduate to being master craftsmen and this, and their pride of perfection, destines them as creators of such fabulous textiles.

When the sari is complete, begins the drama of selling it before it reaches its eventual destination. For, in the bazars, an auction takes place. The narrow ribbon-like lanes are flanked by plinthe buildings and can be negotiated only on foot. Often there are crowded by weavers who have brought their saris for final disposal. Those middlemen who do the buying generally stand around and both the hum of the haggling and the somewhat mysterious ges-

tures rather like a dumb show often end in the weaver handing over the sari to the middleman. Sometimes, if he is dissatisfied he walks away with offended dignity, without having sold it. He might even take it to the back of the rooms, up narrow flights of stairs in the hope of getting a better offer from another middleman, though on the whole, the weavers have their own preferences in the matter and generally deal with people of whom they have had experience before. In the back room the middleman will open up the sari, pass it quickly in review just to make sure that there is no single defect, also perhaps to judge the quality of the sari better and then begins the ritualistic bargaining, without which, this transfer it seems is impossible.

The weaver asks a price; the middleman halves it. The weaver goes down a few rupees, the middleman goes up. The next few progressions on both sides is about five rupees or so. Finally the haggling reaches a figure acceptable to both, and the sari changes hands. The weaver seems to feel that his profit is by no means commensurate with his skill and the labour put into it. The middleman's argument is that the market is capricious and he has to take the risk — an argument that is hardly satisfying. Prices of such saris when they are in vogue are known to be five times as much before they reach the weaver.

or — or if they have sold them in an unaccountable, gone out of fashion. It is the middleman again, who generally arranges for the distribution of the saris at home, and also possibly for foreign consumption — for Benares saris have always been popular abroad.

Somehow or other there always seems to be a small but steady demand for the classical and traditional designs and weaves and the modifications are clearly visible. It is the current craze, the adaptations from diverse sources that are the uncertain ones. There was a period when shadow work was in vogue; and even now cheaper saris are made with designs that are from other sources. Yet when all is said and done, whatever developments have taken place in handloom fabrics, there are still few textiles to equal the sheer luxury and beauty of the Benares sari — and the drama attendant on its creation is, in a sense, symbolic of the unchanging tradition and superlative craftsmanship of a race of anonymous weavers who have received not nearly enough publicity and praise, let alone remuneration. The increasing number of co-operatives, however, might make the commercial aspect of this easier for them, even if the human drama of the auctions decreases. The craftsmanship, which makes these textiles a byword for unbelievable beauty and traditional luxury will, however one hopes, remain unaltered.

SOAP: Lather for Centuries

IVAN SASSOON

SOME years ago I read of how the French Government went on a cleaning campaign. No ministers were purged. But French monuments got a rub of what we have been rubbing ourselves with for nearly 2000 years—SOAP. Sunshine, soap and water gave Paris a new look.

In fact, soap has been giving us a new look for some time now. The Romans made it out of boiled goats' tallow and beach ashes. But they learned the art of soap making from the Gauls who in turn were taught it by the Phoenicians. Through the Middle Ages cleanliness took on—slowly, and before the eighteenth century the bath began to be looked upon as something more necessary than a luxury.

The first English soap works was started in the 14th century. But washing even without soap was very much at a discount during those centuries in England. It was said that James I of England (1608-1625) 'scarcely washed anything above his finger-tips'. When they began to realize that soap was good for the health then soft soaping bodies began.

Soap is a mixture of the salt of a metal with certain fatty acids. Nicholas Lelaudane in 1791 discovered a way of making artificial soda from salt, which gave a great fillip to soap manufacture. Soap at one time was so heavily taxed that

the tax exceeded the price of the soap.

Beauty-conscious women began to grow afraid of too much soap, which dried the skin. But today special soaps are prepared with little soda. At one time a



A soap box, when overturned becomes a makeshift stand for street orators.

few decades back, soap-makers used to employ soap-tasters, who would lick the soap to make sure that there was no taste of soda.

Women have soft soap, a greasy, semi-liquid made from oils treated with potash (and not soda). To soft soap someone is to apply insincere, oily flattery upon him or her. Often employees do it for their employers or sometimes men soft soap their wives. Women even use it. They have two uses for soft soap, one is to get a ring off the finger and the other is to get one on! In an article on how to win friends and influence people, an Eng-

lish writer advises that brilliance will get you nowhere unless you have a knack for being a real smoothie. Or in other words, nothing succeeds like soft soap!

Today over \$80,000,000 are spent on soap. But it's not only useful for washing—you can get your enemy into a lather. A report says that American military scientists are experimenting with soap as a war weapon. Some experiments shown that soap can form a 12-in. wall barrier in under minutes. This will have effect of blinding enemies and sending into a liquid fit!

One can experiment on a small scale with mobs before using soap bubbles militarily. Through soap hoses, bubbles can be formed as the soapy water flows through a dotted nylon screen. And boy, what fun there would be with bubbles, bubbles everywhere. The whole street will look



... then she can believe in her boy friend's sincerity.

as if thousands of whales have been spouting the Ganga on to us

Imagine the confusion and the excitement what with blinded eyes, impaired hearing and slippers, dancing feet. But there'll be no blood-shed, no heads broken, no tear gassing no lathi charge. This idea of blowing bubbles on to over-charged excited citizens was suggested and demonstrated in Atlantic City, New Jersey where a convention was held on the control of mobs, street rowdism and riots. The Police could even have as their theme song that old favourite "I'm forever blowing bubbles, pretty bubbles in the air."

Soap comes in soap boxes. The Americans have made an expression of a soap box. A soap box when overturned becomes a make-shift stand for street orators. From America that term has travelled across the Atlantic to England where in London there is a special corner for soap-box orators, called Hyde Park. Hence a soap-box orator is a fellow who talks airy, fairy nonsense, though sometimes the fragrance left be-

hind by the soap does blind you. The orator with wit and wisdom as, for instance the West Indian, who spying a London hobby, said in one of his Hyde Park



The wealth will be within your grasp

orations. "When I came to England there were many teddy boys. Today they've grown up and are in uniforms."

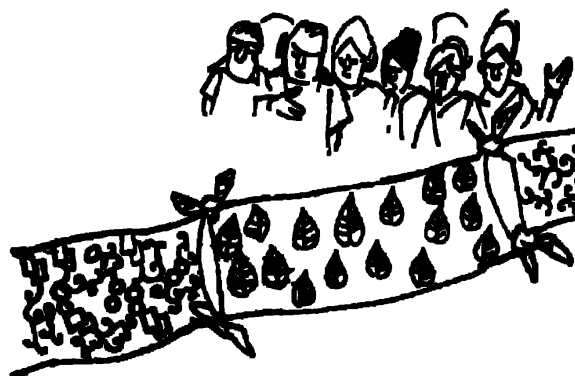
Today the world would find it hard to do without soap. In the early days when sandwichmen used to advertise soaps one bright fellow had written on the front of his board "Don't look at my back", while at the back he advertised the soap he was selling.

If ever you hear that a fellow has one foot in the grave and the other on slippery soap, then you know that he's not long for this world. They also say that if you want to scatter some groups of people, you just have to throw a cake of soap in their midst!

Soap has even entered the world of superstition. One English one says that if a girl has a boy friend and wants to know if he's serious or not, all she has to do is to cut out his initials on a cake of soap, after which she should use it for a bath. If she can still recognise the initials after the bath then she can believe in her boy friend's sincerity. Further he may even propose to her if she cannot then she'd better let him off like her last lot of old shoes.

Heard this one: if you take a bar of soap drop it and catch it before it falls then wealth will be within your grasp. If you drop the soap catch it then wealth will escape your grasp. The other day I caught my like. But so far no wealth! But who knows? Though they say you cannot have your cake and eat it.

Shopping Spree



I bought half a dozen



PARDESI

NIRMAL CHANDRA GANGULI

SINCE dawn I was climbing the rugged steps of Brahmagiri. It was a holy peak of the Sahyadri mountains and the spring at its hoary summit was the source of the river Godavari. At the foot of the mountain was Tryambak, the abode of Iyambakeswar, the mighty Iyambaka. At the ardent prayer of Gotama the sage Godavari appeared at the summit of Brahmagiri and invisibly flowed down to Kusavata Kund which is now a beautiful tank near the Tryambak temple. A bath at this tank washes the sins of seven generations.

Tryambak is eighteen miles away from Nashik on the north-west. It is on the eastern slope of Brahmagiri across which the Arabian Sea is not much far away. It was once covered by dense forests and pilgrims who came here took shelter in the nearby village of Anjaneri for the night.

Sivaji came to worship Shiv at Tryambak and since his time its present day popularity began. The new temple a unique specimen of Nagari architecture was built by Balaji Bhatnagar. Tryambak is now a small and neat township with pucca-road connection with Nashik. Hundreds of pilgrims assemble here on auspicious days like Sivaratri.

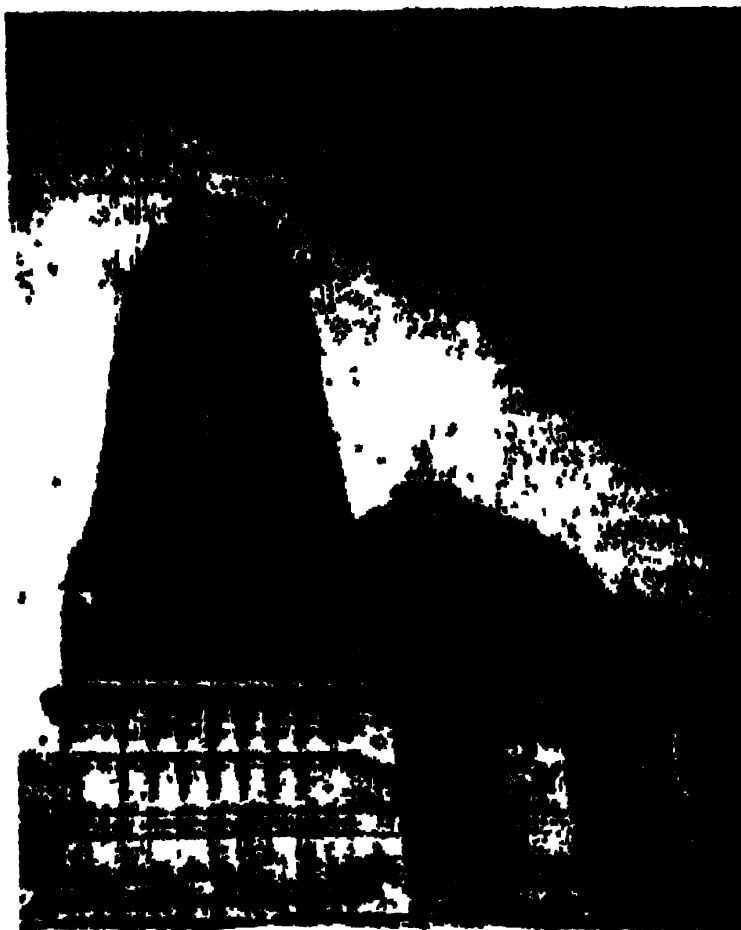
Careless of the day-break chill I had taken a dip in the propitious tank paid obeisance to Tryambak-Bhanku and

started for the source of the sacred river. The stone steps rough and steep were seven hundred in number. On both sides were dark jungles sparsely inhabited.

Fatigued and sweating I reached the top of the stairs only to find that this was not

the journey's end. The rock merely jutted out to make a narrow platform. There was a small temple in a cave, having a stone image of Godavari. A silver stream oozed out from a corner of the cave.

The priest sprinkled some cool water on my head. Limp-



"Tryambakeswar Temple"

PARDESI

ly I sat down and spread my tired limbs.

Is this the source of the Godavari? I asked.

No sir this is where Mother Godavari has appeared in human image. This is Gangadwar.

Then where is the source?

The priest smiled. He spread his arm towards the blue sky. The crown hazy under mist zoomed over our gaze.

That is the summit of Brahmagiri, he replied—where Godama prayed and where Mother has appeared in the form of a spring.

How does one reach there? Few people can or take trouble to. You have to climb rocky pathways through the woods—partly on foot and partly on fours. There are no more steps sir and it is very difficult.

I rested for a while and then quietly left the spot in search of the track that would lead me further up. I was all alone. There was no sound except those of chirping birds and falling twigs. Suddenly my ears caught a novel sound of hitting and striking. I took a few rugged steps and saw a man crouching on the ground breaking the surface.

The fellow stood up and saluted me. He was past middle age, having grey hair and a few days grey beard. He wore a blue jacket and a white loin cloth. Thin and muscular his sinewy hands held a chisel and a hammer. It was surprising to meet such a lone worker on this lonely path.

Who are you? I asked.

Namaste Babooji—my name is Pardesi.

His lips formed a wide grin. I again asked—What are you doing here?

I am cutting stones and building steps for the pilgrims. On my steps they will one day reach the top. This is my job.

At my request Pardesi left his day's work and guided me to the source of the Godavari. It was two hours' hard climbing—stumbling and crawling upward over jutting boulders through dense and virgin forest. Every step was fraught

with danger, every breath was intensely painful. The pilgrim point ended at Gangadwar and very few ventured any further. I would never have succeeded without Pardesi's help. He shouted and warned. Ultimately we rose to the summit and the stupendous glory of the Sahavris under the bright blue sky spread before my eyes. Pardesi showed me that perennial spring at the centre of the peak which was the natural source of the Godavari.

Reaching down to Gangadwar I had no ounce of energy left. The kind priest asked me to rest in the shade and gave me a share of his modest lunch. Pardesi saluted me and went away to his work.

The fellow is doing a fine job, I said—but who has appointed him?

The priest said—No one sir. He has chosen his own task. Pilgrims who mount his steps give him a few coins. That is his income.

Strange and wonderful! Is he a Sadhu?

Yes and no. In fact he was a sadhu once but not now. His life is peculiar.

I wanted some good rest and a good story would please me better. So I requested the priest to proceed.

The fellow was born in the nearby village Anjaneri, the only son of a widow. As a boy he was sent to Nashik for education whence he disappeared. It is said a sadhu wiled him a

with the sadhu till he learnt to move alone as a sadhu himself. He returned after full twenty years. In the meantime his mother had died, his lands were usurped and nobody remembered him. He took shelter by the walls of Trimbak temple.

Who are you Pardesi? They asked him.

I am nobody, he nodded in reply—I am Pardesi.

The name Pardesi stuck to him.

A few days after the priest went on—Pardesi managed a hammer, a chisel and a pickaxe. He left the town and came up the hill. Beyond the seven hundred steps already there he started making new steps. Single handed he started his fight against hard rock and

dark jungle. He has already completed a few steps and intends to stick to it to his last. His work is his worship.

I am a lone traveller on little known ways. The routes I take, the peaks I climb and the places I visit do not interest my neighbours and nobody joins me in my travel. I do not regret being companionless. I find companions on the way. In my brief encounters with them they fill my mind with rich experience, like rain bows that leave memories of colour though they vanish soon in the firmament. Such a companion has been Pardesi, my Brahmagiri guide.

Bidding the priest goodbye I strolled about seeing the new by places of interest. I saw the temple of Debi Koltimbika, the Gorakhnath cave and the samadhi of Muktabai, the saintly sister of Jambhwal. Then again I spent some while chatting with the monk of the Brahma Savitri monastery.

I cared not how time passed. Surrounded by tall trees I failed to observe the dark clouds gathering in the horizon. Listening to the monk's jargon I missed the twitter of homecoming birds. Carefree and alone I reached the top of the seven hundred steps. Then and only then the gathering dusk was pierced by flashes of lightning and the somber silence was shattered by groans of thunder. A sudden and violent hurricane

my gaze with clouds of dust.

I caught hold of a trunk and crouched under it. I closed my eyes and shivered. I was afraid to proceed. If I missed one step I would be no more.

Then came the shower. It was torrential hill-side down-pour. The drops fell like arrows of death and the shade of the tree was no protection. The darkness zoomed around me and I did not know which way to proceed. Where were the stairs that would lead me down? Where was the pathway that would take me back to the monastery? Rain fell mercilessly over the endless sheet of black—which was momentarily pierced by lightning. I dared not leave the root of the tree, feeling as moments flew that I

PARDESI

I lost the sense of time. I realised that I was caught in a labyrinth of meretricious fate whence there was no escape. Still having my voice, I shouted piercing cries to nobody.

A little lamp flickered in the distance. Somebody was shouting back and coming forward. After what seemed an age a lantern was lifted at my feet and I heard a life giving call.

Babooji!

It was Pardesi again. He saved me from inevitable death. He caught hold of my shivering arm and through dark winding paths led me to his cottage.

Don't worry Babooji you will rest here for the night, to be sure!

He gave me food also—some thick chapathis and vegetable hash warm and wholesome. I was too distraught to thank him properly. I only said jokingly.

Well I have heard about your life Pardesi. After twenty years of wandering as a sadhu it looks you have settled quite well as a householder!

Pardesi warily smiled.

Eat Babooji he said—and then you will rest.

In the single roomed thatched cottage there were two narrow Lambton beds. The lantern was near the door.

Pardesi went out and carried a person inside on his back. The lantern's dim glow revealed a woman. He put her down in a corner on some sack and said softly—

Lie down here and sleep quietly.

I observed carefully. She was big breasted and young but blind of one eye. Her sari went down her knees beneath which she had no legs.

Pardesi said—This woman will lie quietly in the corner. Babooji! She won't disturb you.

I could not help feeling uncomfortable and asked,—

Where does she usually sleep?

On the other bed, Babooji. Today you are our guest. The bed is yours.

It was impossible to sleep inside the room. Pardesi also felt my mind which had received a shock and a surprise. The rain was over and the bright moon reigned the sky.

We stepped out to the open verandah and sat on the rug. Pardesi built a big fire which produced a warm glow. The night grew on. The forest hamlet was silent but for occasional howls of wild beasts in the distance.

In a rare shade on the stone steps of Kailaji Tirtha the fellow took shelter from the scorching midday sun. His vacant gaze was towards the dark hollow of the sacred pool. Behind him was a long row of steps leading to the main gate of the temple of Tulja Shabani, the family deity of Nivaji. Though it is a great place of pilgrimages there were but a few on the burning stairs on that hot noon.

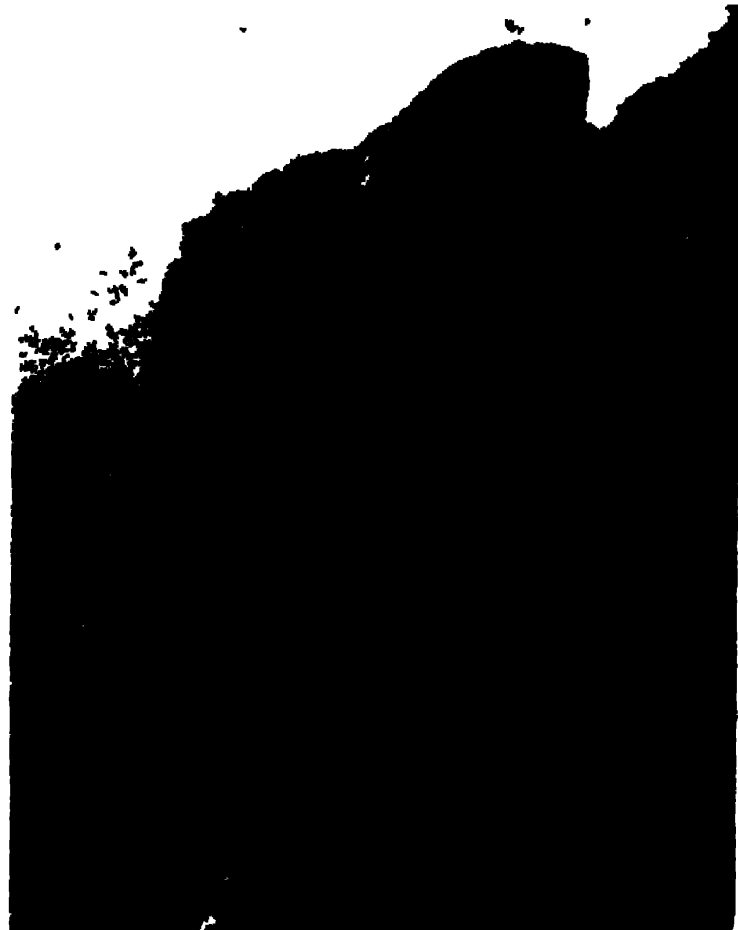
The girl walked down with mincing steps and stood beside. She looked askance at him and observed his tawny arms and hefty thighs. He had a wide chest matted with dark hair. His shaggy moustache and beard were chestnut. He wore a scanty lung cloth of saffron-brown.

Putting her bundle at his side she shouted—

Hey madam keep a watch on this! I am going to take my bath.

She took off her veil and loosened the strings of her choli. Her skirt exposed her deep navel. Lifting it up to her knees she went down the steps to the water. The fellow looked at her as she bathed.

She came up to change her



"Brahmagiri"

wet garments and pulled out a dry skirt and a cloth from her bundle. The fellow had his eyes full. His hungry eyes looked at her shapely buttocks and thighs, her rounded breasts and her wooly armpits.

Clad in dry clothes she stepped before him and threw a mouthful of spittle. Moving him balefully she hissed—

"You son of a swine! Why do you ogle at me like that? I have never seen a woman in life."

Her words kicked the fellow in the spine. He jumped up and shouted—

"Get out from here, you slut! Face me any more and I will turn your cheek with a slap!"

The girl reigned fear for a moment. Then giggling full at his face she turned and rushed towards the temple gate in a buttock swinging run.

The high temple of Talja Bhabani is situated on the brink of a deep gorge of the Balaghat mountains. The Goddess wears a necklace of hundred gold necklaces minted by Shivaji Maharaj.

As the day was done the fellow took shelter in a corner of the wide temple enclosure and spread his torn blanket for the night. The evening prayer over the girl with the red skirt approached him again. She had taken away her veil and her breasts were dancing invitingly as she walked up. She even put some white flowers in her hair.

She laughed at him and said— "Have you eaten any thing idiot? Come here is some food for you."

"You again?" He got out and sat on the ground.

"Oh got out. You say that?" Is it your father's property this temple? She laughed again then said soothingly—

"Come come don't be silly. Have this!"

She put a leaf pot containing some sweets by his side and continued amicably—

"Mind I will sleep in this corner. If you try to play any pranks in the dark surely I will break your nose with a left foot kick!"

The fire is dying out but the moon is brighter. The legless women must be asleep inside the hut but our eyes have no sleep. Fateel is telling me his story.

Well Babooji that night also

I had no sleep. As I threw away her food, the girl felt angry, but she said—

"You are too greedy to take my food, oh?" But what have you got except your dirty loin cloth?"

I spat out some filthy words and hissed between my teeth—

"Do you know what treasure my loin cloth hides? Would you like to have it?"

The night wore on. Fateel continued—poisonous thoughts like wriggling snakes entwined my sleepless brain, thoughts that had nothing to do with what I had craved and practised for the last twenty years—my austerity, my devotion.

A few steps away fast sleep covering herself with her light veil. Looking at her dark form my eyes burnt like the eyes of a tiger. Take a tiger I could have jumped on her and torn her limbs to pieces if others were not resting nearby.

It was grey dawn when the girl woke up. She straightened her limbs and I felt a shooting pain beneath my belly. She stood up and walked towards the backside of the temple. I also rose and followed her stealthily. None else was awake so far.

Narrow steps trailed down to the valley having deep gorge on both sides. I reached her when she was at the top of the stairs. My harsh pull tore her blouse to pieces. One stared dumb at me and she started rushing down. I panted and ran after her.

I was a pious mendicant no longer. In a moment I was turned from a sadhu to a lust-mad beast who must capture his coveted prey.

I had her in my grasp again. My one hand caught her hair, the other clutched her naked breast. Once again she stared at me with mute terror and breaking away with a casual wrench stepped back to the edge. I heard a pitiful cry and the next moment she was not there. She fell down the deep stony gorge and was lost in its dark abyss.

Nobody saw the accident. Babooji, none was the witness of my crime. I could have quietly walked away and leave the temple. None would have found her or found me out. But I could not. I shouted and called people. Men scrambled down the pit, lifted her

blood-stained unconscious body and took it in a lorry to the Omerabad hospital. They put me in the back for having first seen the mishap and raised alarm and took me with them.

The girl had nobody. None knew whence she came with her yellow choli red skirt and bursting youth. All returned to Taljapur except myself. I did not belong to that place,—I belonged nowhere.

For two months she was in the hospital and I at the hospital gate. For two months I writhed in my mind. I who had lost my faith, my ordeal, my mendicant's vow. I, who had nothing in store but a mortal sin. What should I do now? What should I do? With what penance could I wash my self clean?

After two months she came out of the hospital gate not walking but struggling on her launchers. A horrid piece of mutilated skin and bone having lost both legs and one eye.

The doctor congratulated her saying—

"Good luck that you are alive girl! But where will you go now? Who will take you?"

I stepped forward. I am here to take her. She will come with me.

She did not talk but looked at me with a tired gaze of resignation. I also did not speak.

He lifted her up on my shoulders and he put his arms round my neck. I felt a warm sigh on my neck.

Thus, the crippled I had met Babooji. I walked on for days, weeks and months. I passed through villages, towns and places of pilgrimage. Then at last I returned to this last pilgrimage, this source of the Godavari, the redeemer of all sins. You know Babooji, at fourteen I left her in quest of being a sadhu. I have again come back to her when I am a sadhu no more.

The night was ended. The eastern glow touched Fateel's furrowed brow. He rubbed his brow with one rugged palm and said—

"At my Mother's cradle I am reborn a householder and Father Shankar has given me my beloved job. I do not despair but live in hope, the only hope that I shall be able to wash away my sins by their daily grace."

THAT universal horror should have been excited by the murder on the 20th September, 1871 of the Hon'ble John Paxton Norman, Officiating Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court as he was ascending the steps of Town Hall on his way to his Court there (the new High Court building, i.e. the present one, was then under construction) was only to be expected.

But what had surpassed all calculations was the magnitude of the attendance at his funeral the next day. The whole city of Calcutta seemed to be in mourning in genuine unaffected sorrow. That he was esteemed as a public man was known but it came as a revelation how much the people had loved him as a friend as well. Legions filed past his dead body lying-in-state at the deceased's residence in Russel Street.

The crowd was so great at the funeral procession which started at 5 in the evening for the Circular Road Cemetery on Park Street that it was found impossible to allow carriages generally to follow the hearse so that the majority of those who attended the funeral proceeded on foot. Deputations had been sent from all leading Associations European and Indian in Calcutta but the mass of persons of all ranks and nationalities who had assembled to take part in the ceremony — the Commissioner of Police was completely taken by surprise at its vastness — caused all distinction of societies to

MURDER of CHIEF JUSTICE at TOWN HALL

GOPENDRA SIRCAR

lost. The cemetery was crowded with a multitude of persons long before the funeral procession arrived. The service was performed by the Archbishop amid the deep silence of the great assemblage of persons — Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Greeks, Parsis and Armenians who had gathered together to do homage to the memory of him who had so long presided over their Courts.

The facts of the crime, so far as they were officially ascertained, were as follows: "At 11 o'clock on Wednesday morning the 20th September, (1871), the Officiating Chief Justice, having alighted from his carriage under the portico of the Town Hall where he was about to sit to hear appeals, turned round on the upper-most of a flight of 8 stone steps

leading to the Hall, to give some orders to his coachman. On the instant a man, who was standing concealed behind the doorway, rushed out and stabbed the Chief Justice in the back under the left shoulder with a long broad-bladed dagger the knife dividing the eighth rib and passing through the diaphragm. On receiving this blow the Chief Justice turned round and the assassin plunged the dagger into his abdomen with such force as to touch the spine and cause severe internal injury. Mr Norman thereupon ran down the steps pursued by the murderer who was about to strike him a third time when the Chief Justice dashed a brick, which he had picked up into the man's face and caused him to stagger backwards.

At this moment Mr Nor-

man had got about 10 yards from the building, and the large number of persons, chiefly natives, who had witnessed the occurrence, surrounded the murderer, but did not venture to close with him, as he was brandishing his knife. A native workman, however, felled him with a stroke of a bamboo, and a native policeman wrested the dagger from him getting his own hands cut in so doing. A European constable having run up with a rope, the murderer was bound hand and foot and removed amid the execrations of the Indian officers of the Court and others, who were standing by.

The Chief Justice still stood, leaning against a post, but he was quickly placed in a "palki" and carried off to the nearest dispensary. Before he was taken away in the "palki" he said "I don't think I shall live." On the way Dr. W. Palmer came up and, at his suggestion, Mr. Norman was carried to the shop of Messrs. Thacker Spink & Co., where he was laid on a couch in a back room and his wounds were examined. Dr. Fayrer, also, was soon in attendance, and did all that surgical skill could devise to give the sufferer relief, though it was evident from the first that either wound was mortal.

The pain endured by the Chief Justice was great but throughout he exhibited a manly fortitude which was the surest answer to the prayer he himself uttered as he lay in agony "God have mercy upon me and give me courage and patience to bear through to the end." Later on he asked the friend who was sitting by his couch to say

the Lord's prayer, which the Chief Justice followed sentence by sentence, pausing at and slowly repeating the words. "As we forgive them that trespass against us."

The house in which he lay was thronged all day by his colleagues and friends but save his wife, the medical men and one or two of those whom he knew intimately, no one stayed in the room with him. The Archdeacon of Calcutta Dr. Pratt saw him for a few minutes in the afternoon but he was then too much exhausted to bear conversation. Drs. Norman, Chevers, Ewart and Walker were also in attendance and the first two remained with him until he died. He retained consciousness for some hours, but towards mid-night he began to sink rapidly and breathed his last at 1-20, on the morning of the 21st.

The tragic news was immediately sent to the Government and in the course of the day two *Gazettes Extraordinary* were published one by order of the Governor-General-in-Council, stating that the funeral was to be conducted and a monument erected in the Cathedral at the public charge, ordering the public offices to be closed and "17 minute guns to be fired at the time of the funeral," and inviting "all officers of Government and the community of Calcutta to testify by their presence, their respect for the high character of the deceased, and their abhorrence of the foul crime which had been committed."

A similar request was expressed in the *Gazette* issued by the Government

of Bengal. In accordance with these notices, all public offices in the city were closed, every shop was shut and business entirely suspended. The flags of the ships lying in the river and the standard in Fort William were hung half-mast-high all through the day.

The murderer when brought before the Magistrate had no defence to offer. When asked whether he had any question to put to the witnesses against him he said in Urdu what translated literally into English came to "The earth is much below the water and the men have gone to the skies the dog is eating the wall." This hint of insanity was, however, soon abandoned and he contented himself with denying all connection with the murder. He was committed to take his trial at the Criminal Sessions of the High Court on the capital charge, and the officiating Judge Mr. (later Sir) G. C. Paul had no hesitation in sentencing him to the gallows.

Little more was definitely ascertained at the trial concerning the assassin than that he was "a native of the Punjab" and had been for two years living in a mosque in Calcutta. His name was Abdulla. Officially described as a short thickset man of about 45 years of age, with a savage determined expression, and very low forehead, it was "almost certainly" thought in general that the motive of Abdulla's crime was not personal—but beyond that opinion rested almost entirely on conjecture. A petition was picked up near the scene of the crime, but it was a mere

'blind' and was never presented to the Chief Justice. The inclination of belief was that Abdulla was connected with 'the seditious' government of Wahabis, but he admitted nothing.

The following excerpt from a later statement issued by Sir George Campbell Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from 1871-1874 on the murder of Mr Justice Norman, formerly his colleague on the Bench is being reproduced here for its relevancy. 'The late Chief Justice Norman was a man who never had and could not have, an enemy. Not only was he beloved by all his fellow-countrymen, but probably in all India there was no man whose feeling towards the natives was more kindly, who more actively interested himself in their welfare, and who was more accessible to them and more ready to listen to all they had to say and to sympathise with them. He was in every way the most popular of men and so simple in habits that any one might approach him at any time. He was murdered in the most public place possible, where he was surrounded by crowds by an assassin who made and could make no attempt to escape. The man died on the scaffold without giving any intelligible account of his motives. He neither showed any feeling for his own situation nor attempted any bravado; he would only say that he was enraged or excited and felt impelled to the act.'

"The crime", Sir George continued, "was, of course, the subject of much investigation and anxious inquiry. Rumours and suspicions of political conspi-

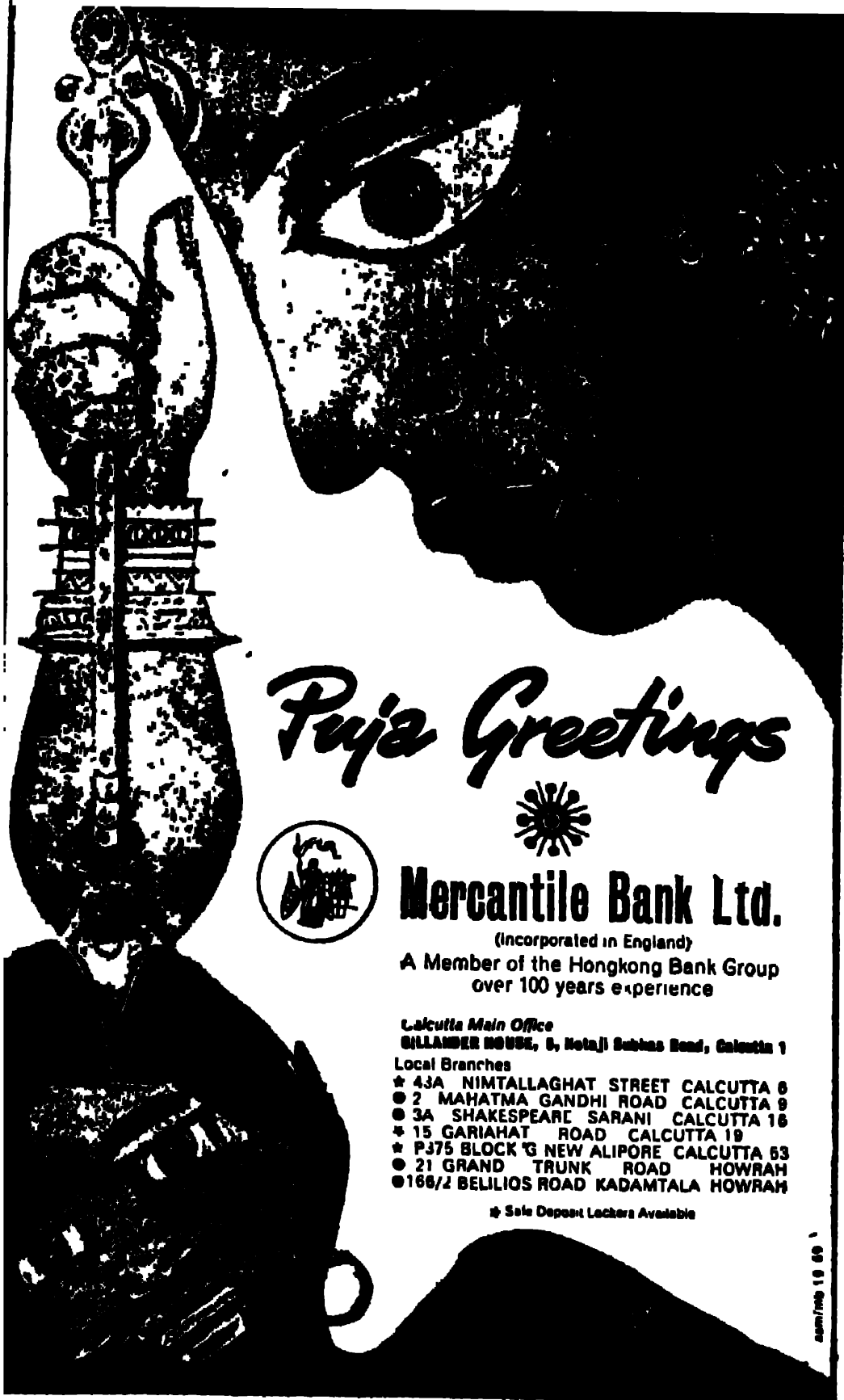
racies were rife, but the closest inquiry failed to show any clue for suspicion. The man's history was to some extent traced; he was a foreigner but for some years had led a wandering unsettled life in India; a morose, a peculiar military man of limited intellect, yet with a desire to acquire clerical qualifications in which he had constantly failed; religious in his own gloomy sort of way. One part of his history seemed to be clearly made out, viz. that while attending the Government school at Mirzapur, where he kept aloof from his fellows and refused to make obeisance to the Bishop with the others when that dignitary visited the school, he had shown symptoms of homicidal mania and had even there talked of killing the Judge but, being told by his religious adviser that it was unlawful to do so, he went off in disgust.'

High tributes were paid to the late Justice Norman by the Press, both European and vernacular, in India. They tended to be unanimous in praising his large-hearted kindness of nature which made him a true friend of the natives of India with whom he used to heartily associate in private and public and in all measures for their advancement he took a very active part.

Though it was only a coincidence that another British dignitary, the highest in India, the Viceroy Lord Mayo was also stabbed to death at the penal settlement at the Andamans on February 8, 1872, yet the two murders one following the other in the course of only 5 months, could not but have produc-

ed a feeling of profound shock, if not that of panic, particularly in the higher echelons of British hierarchy, which had very materially changed the course of the British policy in India.

Years after the assassinations, Sir George Campbell could afford in his 'Memoirs' to be a little bit of humorous in describing the near panic that prevailed among high British officials in Calcutta. 'There was in those days in Calcutta a feeling of personal shock. It was remarked as a curious feature in my position that within a very short time both the one man above me in rank, and the next below me, the Chief Justice, had been struck down by assassins, and some people seemed to think that I might well take some precautions. I thought it better, however, not to let any appearance of disturbance be seen, and took my usual walks as usual, with protection. I was convinced that the two assassinations were only unhappy coincidence. Once only, a little later, I was a good deal startled. I was awoke by a wild man cutting papers and shrieking in my very bed-room, and hastily calling to mind the lessons of my first master, Williams of Badaon, I caught up a pillow, and as soon as possible substituted a chair, used as a shield, legs to the enemy. Assistance soon arrived, and then it turned out that it was only a mad man who had walked quietly past the sentries, as if he were a servant of the house, and had somehow found his way to my bed-room. So I said nothing about the affair."



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THE REPORT

Ar n Bagchi

It was a glorious morning. A lovely sun, soft white cloud on soft blue sky, birds chirping like music, touch of early autumn in all that. In short a morning fit to make the morning maker proud.

The HM however was not feeling particularly happy. He scarcely noticed how lovely the morning was. His eyes were busy scanning the bulk Report he had prepared over the last ten twelve weeks. He alone knew the amount of patience, diligence and skill that had gone in to the work. He was also aware that a lot depended on the Report. Yes a lot!

There was a knock at the door. Must be the English Teacher. None else would dream of doing such an old fashioned thing. Others would just enter. Teachers, guards and students. Especially the students. They just pushed the door open and half-entrance. But this quaint old man teaching a quaint old subject—well he was different.

Come in, the HM said, and added please as an afterthought. No one said please these days. The HM was also doing in line.

The English Teacher entered, having closed the door behind him carefully. For this last act both the door and the HM were grateful. The HM had not yet got adjusted to the habits other visitors inevitably produced. He had suggested once that the HM's Study should have no doors at all. This he strongly pleaded would take the school system one step closer to democratisation. The HM after all was the servant of his pupils. If anyone should enter the study anytime he wished. Also a servant of the pupils could or should claim no privacy. Forceful points he himself thought as he pored then. But to his utter surprise, the Students Council turned the proposal down.

Well what is it? the HM spoke rather sharply as the ET hesitated standing at a respectful distance. The HM

hated such a contingency when he had to be rude to a colleague who meant no harm. The ET specially was always correct in his behaviour. But damnit where would all this adherence to old world manners lead to? Men like the ET were doomed. Probably the HM himself was too. If the Report was not accepted well that would be it.

"Sir" the ET said "I'm sorry to have disturbed you. Please forgive me. But I insist, you must recommend my dismissal at once. You simply must. I just can't put up with this hypocrisy any longer. Please dismiss me or accept my resignation which I submitted three years ago. Please I implore."

Oh well! The HM knew it was coming. What a crazy world! Other teachers wanted so desperately to cling to their positions. And this man actually wanted to quit. So persistent about resigning!

'My dear man let us not be so hasty.' The HM said soothingly. "You know the

THE REPORT

Council would not like it one bit. Remember what happened when I broached the subject for the first time? The commotion, the spate of criticism, the anger and the final denunciation! You want me to go through all that? You, a trusted colleague and a perfect gentleman!"

"Oh, thanks a lot"—the ET looked touched—"Believe me, Sir I would be the last man to wish you suffer on my account. But honestly I can't take it anymore. I cannot go on receiving salary month after month without doing a day's honest work."

"It's not your fault. We

Importation, my foot! Didn't they know, those morons that while they kept their own children half-educated, the top bosses sent theirs to the Missionary Schools and later abroad?"

"Enough"—the HM spoke firmly—"I warn you my friend that your words are totally unwelcome, and repugnant to our socialistic principles. Further, do not think I shall fall a prey to your trick. You want me to mention this in my Report—don't you?—so that the Council would be enraged and let you go? Well, I tell you, You are being unnecessarily optimistic. For I

M.A. in English, didn't you? A gold medal too!"

The HM looked alarmed. "Let us not discuss these silly points. You know I teach only Mathematics. We could not get an English Teacher here. So our Education Minister finally wrote to other friendly States and some arrived from Tamil Nadu, Mysore, Punjab and Kerala. We got you. We are happy about you. What is more, the Revolutionary Students' Council, representing the Revolutionary Co-ordination Committee of the sixty-seven Students' Federations in this great city is happy about you. As the HM of this school I ask you to be a disciplined soldier of the Education Department. Now go and prepare a list of English books that the Sports and Amusement Minister who will preside over our Prize Distribution Ceremony, may give away. And before you ask why give books to students which they can't read anyway, I tell you there is such a thing as decumulum which must be kept up."

The ET left without one more word utterly crushed. The HM worked uninterrupted for a full hour. Yes, he nodded happily. He tackled the ticklish issue of Local Council's Geography Teacher quite deftly, he thought. The particular GT had foolishly charged that the School Council was trying to interfere with the curriculum. This had infuriated the Council. The HM promptly investigated and found that while the GT thought it was all right to ask Class IX students to draw a free-hand map of India, the students backed by the Council thought otherwise. The HM recommended that the students could draw free hand maps home and produce them in class. The Council agreed. The HM decided that the GT should teach only upto Class VIII provided the students of that class agreed and a junior GT would take over higher classes. The Council agreed with that decision.

Then there was that unfortunate case of the Bengali Teacher. A young man of about twenty-nine. He was nominated for invigilation work for everyone believed he would do. Fancy what happened. Within the first hour of the examination he confiscated as many as six



—We inform you Sir, that you are under a ghetao

could not provide any pupil for your class. Isn't that so?" the HM asked.

One could put it that way, of course, the ET agreed. But fact is I did not take on a single class in the last four years and two full terms! An God knows I have tried hard enough. Tried to bribe the mean brats into taking English. Pleaded with those stupid smelly parents of theirs to encourage advancement of English in the family. All in vain. They just would shake their heads and keep mum. The smart ones would even denounce the greatest language under the sun as being a relic of our imperialistic past.

shall do no such thing. And even if I did there was small chance that the Council would take any notice. You are the sacred cow. They would however try to tear me apart.

But I don't understand why I am so covetable a possession? The students themselves did not want English!

That's true. But a school must have an English Teacher in its payroll. Think of our prestige. A first class institution without an ET. Can't we do it?

But why me, a poor untrained teacher from Kerala? here are eligible men here in Bengal. What about you? I gather you are no novice yourself. Why, you got a first in

THE REPORT

text books from the examinees. No one was expelled, of course. But there was trouble during the recess. Chairs were freely thrown about, heads got broken, examination was cancelled. A week-long strike call was issued and fully responded to. The culprit, the BT, was asked to apologise before being dismissed. He wouldn't. So he was hauled up before the Council, denounced and driven out of the profession. The HM could do nothing. How could he under the circumstances? I was a fine chap, would have made a good Bengali Teacher. But how could he be so out of touch with time?

The HM suddenly had company. Three senior student members of the Students Union and the Students Action Committee came in. Without much fuss they demanded to see the Report.

The HM was stunned. This was a secret document. Only the Students Council would read and consider it. He thought and decided whether to show the students and the educational system were in his hand. Only then would he be allowed to continue.

The spokesman for the group explained. We had an

important meeting this morning, Sir. We are of the opinion that the Report vitally affects our interests. So, we have a right to exercise our right. Not that we do not trust you or the Revolutionary Council. But we want to share your responsibility in preparing 'that Report'.

But the Council is your council—only students are represented there,' the HM said.

That's true, Sir. Still, we insist. A certain source tells us that you have recommended five-day week. We say, this is against our declared revolutionary policy. We stick to our day week. That's final.

This was news to the HM. Yes, indeed he had suggested a reversal to five-day week. He certainly felt that little more class work would do the students good. But he was not at all sure of his feelings on many other subjects. He even believed that the Revolutionary Council that was virtually the Education Directorate should be disbanded and hence this nonsense about sharing administrative responsibility with the students stopped. He and schools and colleges and universities run as these were years ago. But would he parade his belief? Would he

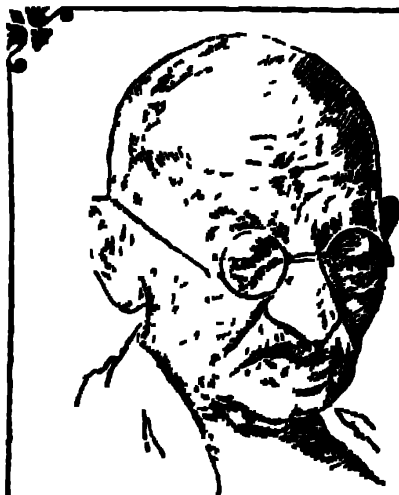
speak up? No. He was discreet, if nothing else. What would have been the use of trying to turn the tide? The politicians were all for placating the students. The police would not raise one little finger if he was slowly lynched in broad daylight—would they?

The students were their own policy-makers and decision-takers. Even the Education Minister had given up lecturing on education. That was that.

But surely, the students themselves were agitating for five-day week—weren't they? The HM thought he was recommending what they had asked for. Now these three boys

The boys were suddenly all smiles. 'We congratulate you, Sir, on your firmness. We like you. Do not misunderstand us. We have just broken off from our old Federation and started a new one. The sixteenth. But the Council does not want to recognise us or allot us representation in the Co-ordination Committee. So we must launch an agitation immediately.'

'We inform you, Sir, that you are under a gherao. We will now issue you an ultimatum. Incidentally, when did you have your tea, Sir?'



AS THOU BLESSETH!

Some thirty five years ago, Mahatma Gandhi expressed his wish to have a really good Swadeshi Ink, to his disciple Sri Satish Dasgupta. Satish Babu entrusted the work to the two young brothers, just out of jail they had to undergo for participating in the freedom movement. With no capital and resources other than utter sincerity and devotion, the Maitra Brothers undertook the mission that produced Sulekha, now a world famous Fountain Pen Ink.

The fame and sale that Sulekha enjoys to-day were not built in a day. Years of trials and tribulations, continued research, co-operation of the workers and the appreciation of the countrymen stand behind this glorious success. In this Centenary year of the Father of the nation, we bow our head to him with deepest reverence.

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THOUGH VANQUISHED

WHY am I still teaching? Some-time or the other that question must have hit every member of the profession. Maybe it is never absent from his mind. There are reasons for the self-inquiry: poor working conditions, patchwork policies, prickly politics sprouting everywhere, sharp decline in standards since 1947, status at low point (though salaries on the whole on the upgrade), research facilities not worth mentioning, today's students—a hopeless lot either indifferent or insurrectionist—who has not heard the song of songs? Staff Common Rooms all over the country ring with no other music as sweet. Leaving aside politics the teaching profession contains perhaps more lost souls than any other. But without a thing left what is a teacher worth? Or has the salt lost its savour?

As Socrates is there to remind us one must obey one's oracle—*gnadharma*. So here I am and I believe in good company. Given a choice I would choose the same once again. Only I would wish to do the work a little better than I have been able to so far. On this razor's edge who can say that he has never faltered? I can't. But I would not dream of changing it for another

Why? It is not an easy question to answer. Laziness likely? Time was when in any cultured community the role of the teacher was respected. He enjoyed fringe benefit—that more than made up for every other loss. One thinks of the old Indian ideals of education. Today it is no doubt more talked of than practised. But the psychological soundness of that ancient system, its emphasis on quality control based on the candi-

never a growth of the soil. The question is: is it any more rooted even now? The post-Independence period has been particularly botched, barren and bewildering. Two of our educator-Presidents (the line is now extinct) had repeatedly expressed their grave concern about what was happening. But neither their generalities nor the tinkering of the Education Ministers have been able to set the house in order.

SISIRKUMAR GHOSE

dates—competence (*udh-karma*) and respect (*shree-dhara*) for the preceptor will be hard to match. Also the old teachers represented their culture; they had a greater stake in the community's welfare and, so far as one can judge, had not fallen a prey to gnawing doubts about their own utility and function. At the same time there is no going back to the good old days. Worldly demands for putting the clock back are little better than an escape from reality. No one takes them seriously.

The fact is, on the Indian scene, except for some neglected but outstanding thinkers, the whole of our education has been in a state of mass. As for British Indian education it never was rooted,

For a long time an easy way out was to blame the British. Such a convenient passing the buck is no longer possible though one explanation of the poor quality of education in India is as we have already seen its prolonged and calculated rootlessness. In modern India 'educated' has become almost a synonym for the de-nationalised. Witness the *Autobiography of an unknown Indian*.

Here we touch upon another reason for the present troubles: the neglect of National Education. The phrase is not unfamiliar; its champions have been vocal in the past but except to give it a sacrosanct reactionary twist, the protagonists did not know what they were saying or doing. Education is always education for wholeness and not a retreat to reaction. As one of

ALTHOUGH VANQUISHED

the great educators of our times, the Mother, Sri Aurobindo Ashram once said, education will be based on what we hope to receive from the future, not what we think we know about the past. It is thus a dialogue with possibility. If you like with destiny. Education becomes a part of human evolution. It is what one makes of life: a total commitment that cannot be restricted to a few years of schooling or professional training. School is not a place or programme of instruction, it is a way of living, the way you grow. In this sense an educated community has never existed: it can only be a dream of the future. There are miles to go.

That our long muddling through has not produced worse disasters is a miracle. Faced with double-talk in high places and intolerance in the Establishment, and the desire for excellence almost burnt out, what are the teachers expected to do? Become a one-man opposition? How much does that help? It can easily degenerate into a barren role, at best a stoic stance. Some turn cynical, a growing and convenient pose. For a lucky few there is a happy exit—Westward Ho. With little or no conscience to take care of they can go abroad and stay out. This deserters' policy—brain drain, as it is called—is causing the government some headache. But the government has largely to thank itself for what is happening. What makes it in some ways even worse is that many of these climbers have now come back and crowded the profession. Armed with phoney

or impeccable degrees these saboteurs are engaged in eroding the institution from within. Many of them are already on the top of the tree. Others hope to follow soon. To have to suffer these careerists and galumphing conference-wallahs is agony enough. Pushed to the corner, the honest teacher is about to be an extinct species. In such a dismal setting to expect the teachers now driven to adopting fiercely trade union tactics, to give a lead on the national front is to nurse an illusion. Luckily, no one does, not seriously.

Still, here I am, and, as I have said, I mean to stay. Like others in the profession I am not a stranger to its many frustrations and heartaches, the reign of politics and of unholy impostors, the settled anarchy of things with a fear that worse might follow, the overpowering feeling of being condemned to live—the sad, wasted years—at a low potential, of unachievement, and of soul-killing routine. And of course 'I' means 'We'.

Then what is it that holds us together? Hard to say. Still, I would say it is an affirmation of one's faith for living, perhaps also of the capacity to learn. A calculated adventure, the experiment of education keeps you alert. Heuristic, it may help to clarify your motives, thought and conduct, a little channel for the light to enter a world of darkness. I think a teacher has a greater reason—and chance—to know himself and pass that insight to others.

At the same time you cannot share your days with the young—rebel or

not—without perpetual surprise, without learning something new all the time. But, of course, the teacher not only receives, he also gives, abundantly. Once the rapport has been established, how the gifts come crowding, from both sides! For such men and women teaching becomes, what it always is or must be: a sacrifice, a consecration. Without a sense of the holy the teacher has no right to exist. (This, I suspect, is what has happened, here is the root malady. The Elders have disappeared from the scene.)

What the teacher—and every man—is that in relation to both himself and others—offers the younger people and through them to the community is more than a mere skill or a set of information. Rather it is an attitude, a way of life through participation, a growing or healing through dialogue. And not only what he gives but how he gives is important. But that which outweighs every other consideration is, I believe, the gift of youth which always remains his and is never withdrawn. To be allowed, all one's life, this richest treasure of nature, history and society is a legacy that one would not easily exchange for anything else. And to be able, however slightly, to shed a little light on their way through the mysteries of life and death, the search after meaning, the agony and the ecstasy—for myself I would ask for no other reward except that sudden flash in their eyes, the knitted brow of the little thinker, wrestling with the pain and the puzzle, the smile on their lips,

the eager, often unexpected turn in the debate that seems to go on for ever and for ever. A teacher who has not had this compensation, this mutual enrichment, is to be pitied. He had better look elsewhere. We receive but what we give. What have we given, really?

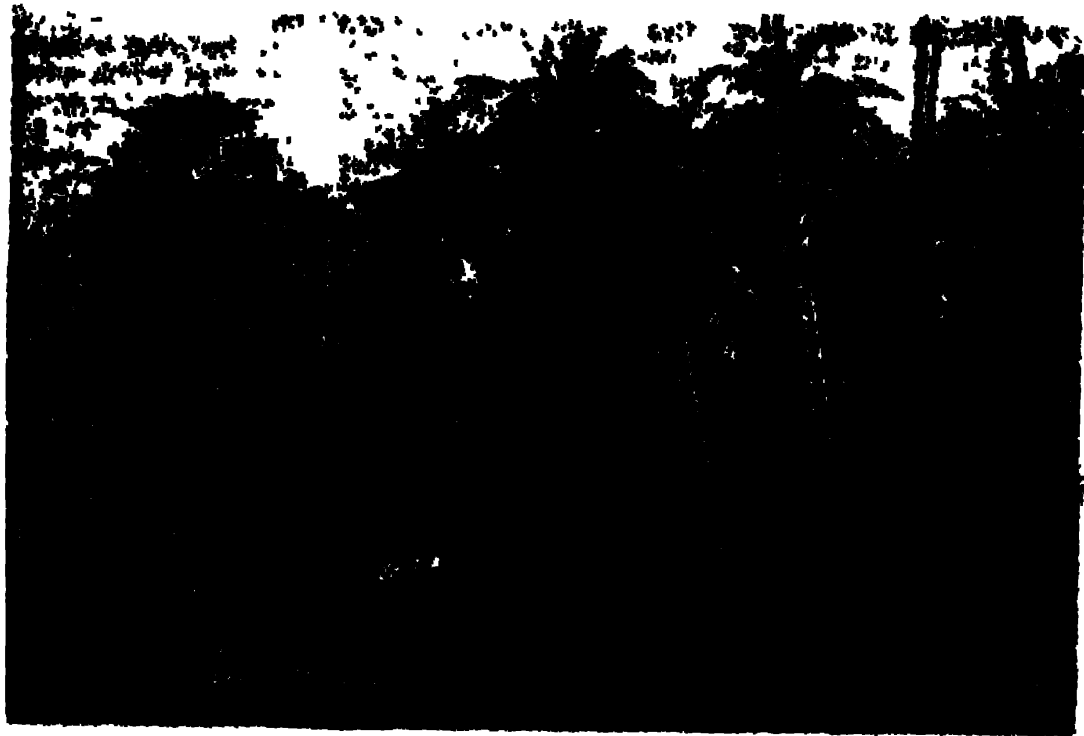
In a world well lost or given over to chaos and contingency, as the highest point of contemporary consciousness the teacher is a lonely hero, a voice in the wilderness. Culture is always threatened by anarchy. In that fight the teacher is in the front line of defence, he embodies values. The work done by him is not just 'noble', as has so often been dinned into our ears. It is also vivid, vital and essential. But how can one defend what one does not believe in, how give what one does not have? That is the dilemma of the

modern teacher, or most of them, the real sense of the betrayal of the intellectual puffed with his own importance without doing anything socially significant. Today's teacher or intellectual stands for values which he no longer represents. Else he turns into a fluent connoisseur of catastrophe singing doleful ditties or may be just content to be clever that never-failing stand-by for the irresponsible even and especially when they espouse politics.

How can the government help? The government is not blind to these problems. In its own way it has done something in the way of the University Grants Commission, the improvement of salaries, the setting up of national laboratories, mostly white elephants, scholarship schemes, grants-in-aid, etc. But the pace of the gov-

ernment is bound to be slow and hampered, by red-tape, caution and convention. It is also far less sensitive and plastic than its individual members. In the last analysis, education involves an imponderable factor: it depends on the creation of a climate of opinion, of purposive activity, a zeal for excellence. Can the government legislate idealism or tolerate slow growth? It is a rhinoceros and not a gardener.

Today the teacher may be alone. But alone or together he does what none else can. And he does it because he can do no other. Scavenger and midwife in the struggle between civilization and catastrophe he is our only hope. Here or there, while breath lasts I would rather be with him and as co-disciples of my students than with any other.



COCONUT GROVE (W. Bengal) Photo. AMITESH BANERJEE

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AT certain stages of the early human society, the division of labour was adopted towards a self-evolved principle of daily life. It is at that time that barter was accepted among newly-grown communities as a convenient form of exchange for necessities of life. Starting with the individual as the unit and centre of the activity, trade was expanded among the primitive peoples, on the wings of the system of barter that is, exchange in kind.

But a time came when under civilizing influences the system proved itself inconvenient, consequent to which certain common and lasting media were naturally thought of and spontaneously adopted by the community. Among the ancient peoples wealth was largely computed in cattle, and in India the cow

stood as the higher unit of barter, the definite references of which we have during Vedic period. The lower unit of barter took various forms and as might be expected, various objects supplied the units among various peoples. Common objects like shell beads, small weapons and sometimes bars of copper and iron counted among

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the lower units for exchange.

It is however not unlikely that the practice of barter in cows was in vogue even as far back as the time of Panini (550 B.C.). At a still later stage, with the discovery of precious metals, further advancement was achieved in the evolution of coinage when gold was substituted ultimately for all barter,

In fact, the Greek stater and the Persian daric certainly, and the Sanskrit suvarna possibly, represented the value in gold of a full-grown cow calculated by weight. There is evidence that in certain countries, such as, ancient Greece, even pieces of iron were used as units of exchange. While in India river-beds like that of the Indus and other northern and north-western rivers served as a fruitful source for units of higher currency in the shape of gold dust washed out of them. According to Herodotus when an Indian province or satrapy was included in the Achaemenid Empire of Persia, 360 talents in gold dust was fixed for tribute from the province to the king. This continued for roughly 200 years from 518 B.C. to about 350 B.C. The other precious metal, silver, which had no natural sup-

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ply here in India was only received in exchange for gold.

Subsequently, the necessity for standardised exchange was felt, as a result of which these metals came to be weighed out into graded measures under royal authority. Such a process doubtless had its immediate appeal for traders and merchants as well as the ruler, the receiver of taxes and tributes. This glorious, if not historical transition from irregular barter to a standardised and graded system of universal exchange through a medium equally acceptable to all people and countries had simultaneous development in both Eastern and Western hemispheres. However, there lay the difference in the precision with which these two parts of the world had their own coinage with marks or inscriptions defining their respective issuing cities or districts. Of course in case of India there was a significant departure from the above and the conspicuous absence of mention of the city of issue or the royal authority responsible for it, seems to suggest a dignified detachment from concern for material permanence.

With the discovery of a hoard of punch-marked coins near Taxila, the theory that ancient Indians derived their knowledge of coinage from the Babylonians or from the Greeks stands dismissed. To be more sure, the royal bust on the obverse and the figure of the Hellenic deity on the reverse shown on the Greek coins are conspicuously absent on the early Indian coins. Besides, while the Bactrian Greek

coins are round in shape and conform to the Attic standard, the earliest in the coins are mostly square and have nothing to do with the above foreign standard. Panini, the celebrated grammarian, mentions the Karshapanas corresponding to the punch-marked coins and a number of other coin-types including Nishkas, Satamanas, etc.

In the Buddhist Jataka stories, that represent a culture of the sixth or the seventh century B.C., there is mention of at least three classes of gold coinage. The highest denomination among these was the Nishka, the Suvarna being lower and the Mashaka the lowest in value. The silver coin said to be in vogue during this period was the Karshapana, although gold and copper were also acceptable for this variety. The scene of the Jataka purchase on the Bhairu and Bodhi-Gaya railing (2nd century B.C.) showing the square type of punch-marked coins further strengthens the evidence.

The antiquity of coined money is carried further back in view of the reference of Satamana coin in the Srauta-sutra of Katyayana. Nishka, as indicated in old literature, signifies a necklace, which probably consisted of gold coins strung into an ornament, but the word is definitely used in the sense of a coin at least in one place in the Atharvaveda. Another kind of gold coin was the Suvarna, although as also mentioned by Manu, we have in the Brahmana period, yet another class known by the name Krishnala. In ancient India, the

names of coins also supplied the names of metal weights. Not only, for instance, do Nishka, Suvarna, etc. signify classes of coins, they also stand for the names of the weights according to which metals were weighed out. Until about a couple of centuries back lumps of metal were carried as currency in Burma and measured-out pieces from these were tendered in exchange for the article required. In fact even in the early Rigvedic period unshaped metallic currency was also known, and it was denoted by the term *hrianyapinda*.

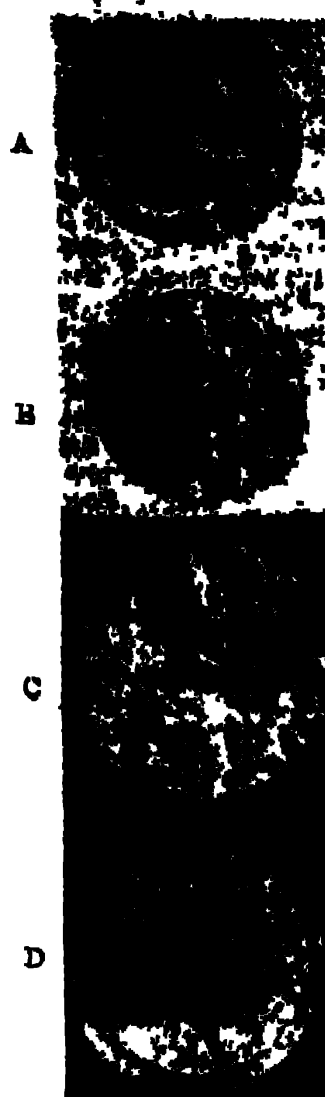
Another early name for a coin is *rupya* which came to be so termed from the occurrence of the *rupa* or the symbols and designs on them. The term *Purana* or *Dharana* also signified a silver coin 32 *ratis* in weight. The Indian gold coin, *Dinara* adopted from the Roman *denarius*, is mentioned in the Jain canon, *Kalpa sutra*. Its existence can be traced back to the Kushana period. In fact with the use of the Roman Empire numerous gold, silver, and copper coins were brought to India through commercial transactions and the discoveries of these, especially on the sea-coasts, bear unmistakable witness to the fact.

Punch-marked coins in general are the oldest indigenous currency of India with an independent origin and date from about the second millennium before Christ. They are known as *Purana* as found in the stories of the Buddhist Jatakas. Of the symbols on the punch-marked coins the fish, or rather groups of them, form a very important one. The fish sym-

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sol is as old as the seals from Mohenjo-daro. It continues to be used prominently in the coins of the Pandyas of the South. Another symbol very prominent and common is the so-called Y'jain symbol. Scholars have classified the ancient Purana Karshapana and other similar types into at least four classes. These are (1) solid ingots (2) bent bars (3) square-punch-marked coins and (4) similar circular ones. The punch-marked coins were distinct from the die-struck. The die covers the whole or most part of a coin but a punch leaves its impression on only a small portion of its surface. The different marks on the punch-marked coins reveal that far from being haphazard they represent coinage marks for different provincial towns and principalities.

There is a big gap after the age of the Puranas and Bharanas in the coin systems of India. Although before the Greek conquest there exists evidence of commercial intercourse between the north-western Indians and the Vahlka countries (Balkh), the Middle East and Bavelia (Babylon). It is only after the Greek invasions of India that a definite system of foreign coinage is available as currency in this country. In fact, this period encounters a sudden and altogether different and highly developed system of coinage. Here in the Indo-Greek coin we meet for the first time in Indian coinage the representation of the ruling king in busts as well as in full anthropomorphism. The reverse of these is occupied by figures of Greek deities



From top A Chaudagupta Amaravati type coin B Samudragupta 4th century A.D. C - Samudragupta 4th Century A.D. D - Vasudeva, 2 3rd century A.D.

and monograms, some of the latter being continued in the subsequent coin systems.

In spite, however, of the assimilation of the foreign motif and devices by the immediately succeeding Kushana Empire, the strongest influences of pure Greek art had definitely passed away before the time of Kaniska and the entire fabric of contemporary coinage, from

that time onwards, appears far more Oriental than Greek. In the issues of the Sophytes, ruling in the Punjab and considered one of the earliest coins of the time of the Indo-Greeks, we have the figure of a cock on the obverse and the head of the king on the reverse. The cock is a direct substitute for the owl of the ancient Greeks. So far as the portrait of the king on coins is concerned, sometimes curiously differing portraits of the same king were in use. For example, in the case of Strato I, two portraits, one in youth and the other in old age, were used for two types of his coins.

At this period, not even earlier, the coins of some of the tribal republics of India constitute a class by themselves. The coins of the Ajunayanas, the Adimbaras, the Kuninda, the Malava and the Yaudheyas are characterized by rural symbols and scenes and sometimes by figures of deities.

Incidentally Kadphises II, one of the Kushana rulers, established a gold coinage in conformity with the contemporary Roman aurei. The standard Kushana gold coins were in fact, struck in three denominations: the double stater, the stater or dinara (Roman aureus of 124 grains) and the quarter stater. A rare stater of Vima Kadphises preserved in the British Museum shows the king seated on a two-hooved chariot on the obverse. On the reverse of the extensive gold and copper coinage of Kaniska and his successors, Huvishka and Vasudeva is portrayed a whole pantheon of deities: Greek, Hindu, Iranian, the great Buddha himself.

The most striking feature of the Kushana period, adopted and assimilated by the Guptas, who succeeded the Kushanas, the founders of an empire was, perhaps, the figure of the deity Aśokaśho who was metamorphosed into the Indian Lakshmi in the successive period. The standing king and seated goddess type had a number of variations such as the standard, the lion-slayer, the archer, the chhatra, and the peacock types. Of the other important varieties of Gupta coins mention may be made of the Aśvamedha type struck by Samudragupta where the figure of the sacrificial horse tied to the Yupa post on the obverse is a unique representation of the animal motifs on coins.

One of the most interesting issues of Chandragupta II, son and successor of Samudragupta, was his portrait-coin where the legend of Rupakīrti occurs below the figure of the king meaning that the figure represented a correct portrait of the monarch with emphasis on his personal beauty. Indeed no better portrayal of the royal person handling the lotus can be imagined than the figure on this coin represents.

Prior to Skandagupta the last of the great Gupta kings all Gupta gold pieces conformed to the weight standard adopted by the Kushanas who, on the other hand, followed the Romans. Skandagupta made a departure and introduced a heavier standard answering to a weight of about 142 grains, that is, coming very near the ancient Hindu Suyama.

With the break-up of the Gupta Empire, and advent

of the Hunas, the most beautiful of the coin systems of India in gold was lost, and lost for good. No Hunan coin shows any originality of design, and the majority of them are either imitations, from or restricted upon the Sassanian issues showing the usual fire altar with attendants. The copper money of the Hunas seems, on the other hand to have been imitated from the similar coins of the Guptas. The tremendous havoc wrought by the Hunas for the next few centuries is amply proved by the survival of the coinage of the great Emperor Hui-shiavaidhana in the tin-silver piece bearing the name Siladitya. In another seventh century coin namely that ascribed to Sasanka, the ambitious king of Gauda, a significant continuity is evident in the coin-motifs of the Imperial Guptas. While the reverse has the beautiful lotus-seated Gaja-Lakshmi the figure of the recumbent king on a lively bull adorns the obverse.

So far as numismatic is concerned just after the 3rd century A.D. there is no remarkable point of contact between the north and the south. However certain devices, like the elephant pagodas of the Gajapati dynasty, were possibly employed by northern kings like Harshadeva of Kashmir. While gold and copper were the metals mostly in use in the south the former had two denominations: the larger the Varaha or pagoda, also known as hun (50 to 60 grains) and the smaller the ranam (5 to 6 grains) being based respectively on the weight of two seeds the Calanju or Molucca bean and the Manjadi Pa-

goda, it may be stated, was the term applied by the Portuguese to this type of coins. The copper issues were known as Kasu, whether from the word 'cash' is said to have emerged.

The earliest type of gold coins from the south, consists of spherules with a minute punch-mark on one side. These, as they independently seem to have grown, probably supplied the prototype for the Padma-tankas, described below. Almost simultaneously during this period, Roman gold seems to have been also in currency in these southern regions. In distinction to this the 'druck' coin or South India have been typified by the Vijayanagar pagodas. South India was noted for introducing some of the very small currencies in India. Indeed except, perhaps for the silver hemitelemnia of Athens, weighing 14 grains the silver tues of Calicut form the finest money in the world weighing between one and two grains.

The cup shaped Padma-tankas were probably first struck by the Kadambas. These had marks of an eight-petalled lotus with Sankha (conch-shell) and other auspicious symbols around. Variations of these marks were also adopted by certain contemporary and later kings like the Chalukyas. During an extensive period of about four to five centuries South India it seems adopted a number of animal motifs some of which were the special dynastic symbols for the ruling house.

The legends on coins from earliest times have been more or less confined to names and titles or vague eulogies for the mon-

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arch In a Kadamba coin there is a legend which recounts a military achievement of the king. In the south the Cholas were supreme from the time of the great Chola King, Rajaraja and the early coinage of Ceylon has been very much influenced by the types of later Chola coins.

The Pallavas, too, for their foreign trade, had their coin designs in a double-masted ship. The rise of the Vijayanagara kingdom is an important landmark in Indian political history and numismatics and while the southern half of it remained paramount, the northern passed into the hands of the Muslims who superseded the indigenous types by their own stamps. Of the other important type of mediaeval coins of India which deserve mention specially from the artistic point of view, the coins of Assam, being octagonal in shape with clear lettering of the late mediaeval period, come foremost. Nepal coins from the time of Bhupatindra Malla of Bhaktapur (1687-1721 A.D.) and notably belonging to the reign of Yuddha Vikrama (1799-1816 A.D.) of the Gorkhali Dynasty are also worth-mentioning which offers designs in geometrical patterns.

While the portrait of the king and other pictorial representations occupied the faces of coins in pre-Muslim periods, the Muslim period shows a conspicuous absence of the same, the engraving of image being forbidden by the Faith. Muslim art, in this sense, however, found its sole expression in displaying the calligraphic art in issues of this period. In fact, the Kufic writing on

the Indian issue of Mahmud or Ghazni (1001-26 A.D.) with his name and a Sanskrit translation of the Kalima in Nagari on the obverse, remains unrivalled in respect of numismatic calligraphy in miniature. It continued to be the one impelling motif on coins of the Muslim period right throughout.

The Kalima executed in Arabic script on an early tankah of Altamash indicates perhaps to what height of intricate workmanship the art reached in so early a period. During this period both the obverse and the reverse were chiefly devoted to inscriptions giving the name and titles of the king, the date of the Hijra era, and the name of the mint. In this respect, the Muslims struck a completely new note and, in fact, turned an absolutely new page in the history of coinage in India.

In the Muslim period coinage was far too closely mixed up with religion and hence the Muslim creed was used on the coins as an essential feature thereof.

In the gold coins struck by Muhammad-bin-tughluq continued to bear a Hindu feature in that they show the Goddess Lakshmi on the obverse, perhaps in imitation of the Manu coins of Altamash, the third Sultan of the line had, rather unusually, his portrait on horseback shown on an early silver issue.

But the greatest moneyer of this period or rather of any period was Muhammad-bin-tughluq (1325-51 A.D.) whose forced currency, issued to meet a financial crisis, bore names of the different denominations in Kam. But a general decay in the standard of

coinage set in slowly on account of the failure of the monetary experiment of Delhi Sultan.

Then the provincial political units came into being and consequently coinage too distributed itself in various shades and denominations almost independent of each other. In Bengal a new standard of 166 grains, was adopted for the silver currency. Gold was extremely scarce. An indigenous standard of coins probably did away with the necessity for copper. The silver latins issued by Adil Shah of Bijapur, inscribed shell-like pieces, constitute an interesting piece of coinage of the period. The square coinage from Kashmir with mint name and date enclosed within an inner rectangle bearing a close resemblance to similar types from Malwa are a distinct contribution from the north.

The Mughal came in and the dawn of their supremacy in India saw the climax of Indian silver coinage if not also of gold. The earlier coinage, the Shahrukh of Babur and Humayun seems to have been as unsettled as the fate of the rulers themselves. With Akbar begins coinage proper. Ichangiz's Memoirs and Abul Fazal's accounts give a full account of the Mughal coin systems. Both Akbar and Ichangiz found in this enterprise the most convenient field for the full play of their artistic sense. Indeed as different were the denominations and weights for the Mughal coins from one of 1000 to others of only a few grains so varied were the uses to which these were put. Sometimes they were meant for presentation to ambassa-

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done and sometimes also to be given away as largesse in tiny pieces. The latter were known as *nisa* or *Nisai Akbar*.

Jehangir and Shah Jahan are reported to have issued a few gigantic silver pieces. While the former's weighed about five and a half pounds, the latter's issue is a 200 mullah piece now preserved in the British Museum. The standard of the Mughal gold coin varied from 160 to 175 grams while the Mughal silver mullah varied a standard of 175 grams. When Aurangzeb reimposed the *Jizya* or poll-tax on the 'Kafirs' in 1679 he tried a new tender the *dikka* or *hadd dikhani* which are in haste to facilitate payment. In Akbar's coin and later almost throughout the usual term for copper money is *fulu*. The Mughal coins were mostly of the

coins of the *Ilahi* era — *Allahu Akbar Jalla Jallalahu* — is one of the remarkable innovations of Akbar and equally remarkable is the coinage of the mullah shaped like a double mullah. While Akbar started the practice of inscribing couplets on coins, Jehangir followed it with a unique zeal and the most noted novelty introduced by the latter was the Zodiac coinage in both gold and silver.

During Mughal period pictorial representation of the Signs of the Zodiac were substituted for the names of the month on the reverse. One such coin known as the *Baccamallah* depicted the emperor holding a goblet in his right hand and another the large eared cross-legged with a cup of wine in his hand the inscription in the middle with legends in

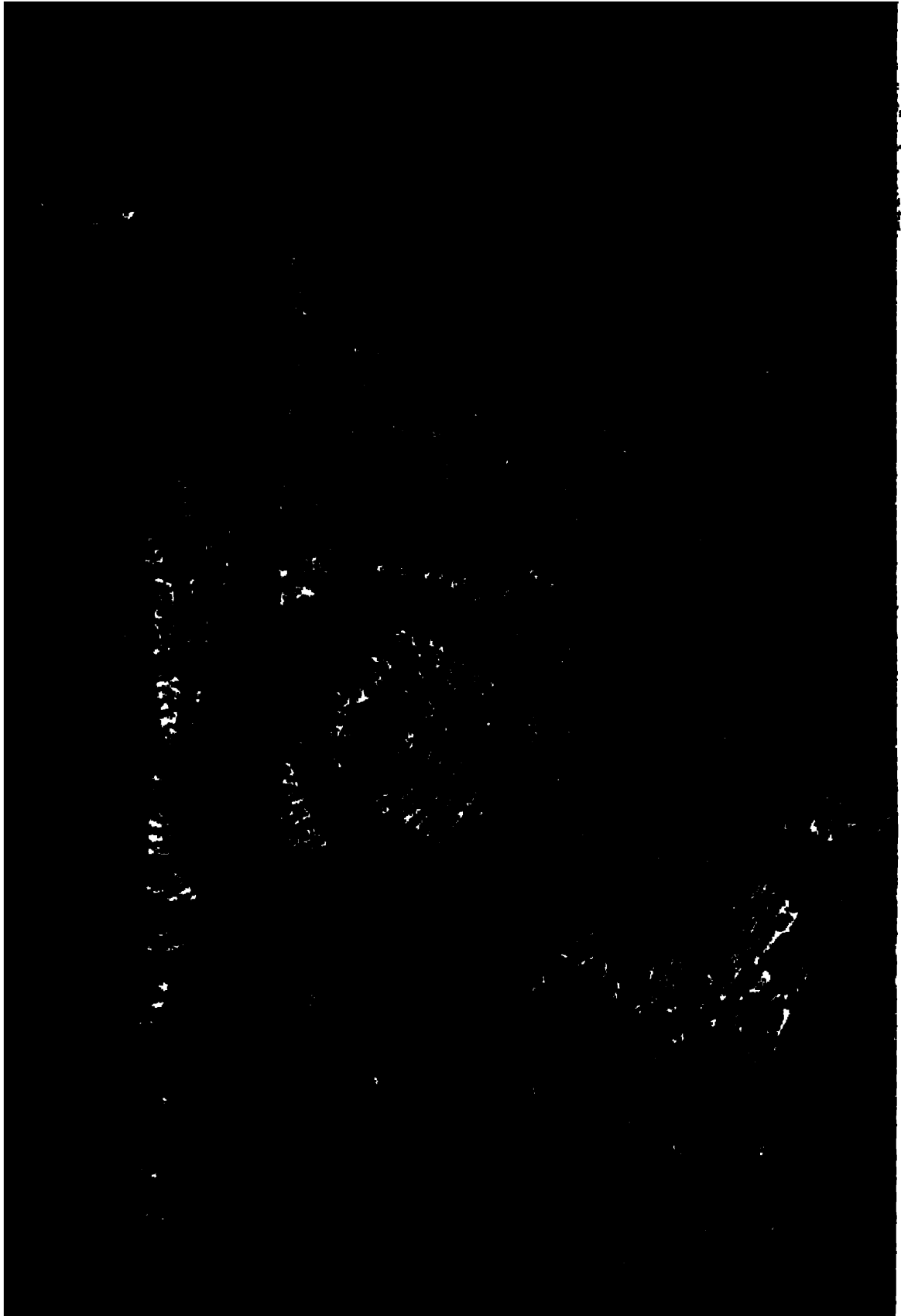
round. These legends deserve special mention. They read on the obverse 'Destiny has drawn the portrait of His Majesty Shah Jehangir on gold and on the reverse it invokes the sun as the constant and equates his name with that of his father Akbar. Another remarkable feature of Jehangir's coinage is the association of the name of *Nurud-din* on coins.

The story of Indian coins from after Shah Jahan is odd. The successors of the Mughals more particularly the East India Company and the provinces under the Native rulers with Mughal ancestry continued the later Mughal types though from about the end of the 18th century the emergence of a distinctive type in copper under the East India Company mark is completely new and in Indian coin development.

Shopping Spree



Waiting for the latest design



PAINTINGS OF GAGANENDRANATH TAGORE

AMIT ROY

DURING the early part of this century India was dominated by the British imperialism, consequent to which the Nation lost its integrity and its homogeneity of cultural possession. Spiritual ideals, there was a revolutionary awakening to the emancipation of the motherland. In this delicate duty the part played by the poet, artist or a scientist is no less, and hence it is difficult to think of India's struggle for freedom without those great sons of Bengal, Abanindranath Tagore and his elder brother Gaganendranath, who struggled with their brushes, pen and colour for reestablishing the independence of India's national art.

But curiously enough unlike his brother, Gaganendranath produced huge paintings of Indian life bearing a stamp of strong individuality, romantic, mystic remaining notwithstanding always a 'realist' in the true sense of the term.

Gaganendranath was born in the year 1867. As to his formal schooling, he had little of it except some time in St. Xavier's School, where he took more interests in drawing and painting than reading the books.

Gaganendranath took to painting rather late and remained as an active painter for not many years. Unfortunately, he was struck down for quite long years in paralysis and died in the year 1938, leaving behind a large number of invaluable works.

His earliest studies of Gaganendranath were the doing of brush drawings of Indian crows and some illustrations he did for Rabindranath's *Jivansmriti* which came out in the year 1912 undoubtedly exhibited not only his quick adaptation of the technique of the Eastern way

but transformation of the same into his own.

His works of fascinating realism are full of charm and depict a remarkable blend of skill and sensitivity. As for example in his sketches of crows the most common species of scavenger birds in



Gaganendranath Tagore—a self-portrait

PAINTINGS OF GAGANENDRANATH TAGORE



A painting from 'Himalaya Series' etc.

India he has exhibited them with infinite variation of tone in Chinese ink with delicate stroke of brush. The crow, a neglected bird has thus been transformed into a thing of beauty in the hands of this great artist.

And this had brought it into limelight immediately. In the year 1914 an exhibition of paintings by Indian painters was opened at Pavillon Museum in Paris by the then President of the French Republic. The exhibition was arranged by Prof. O. C. Ganguly, where six paintings of Gaganendranath were exhibited. And all of them were highly acclaimed by the best critics of that time. A similar exhibition was later arranged in London, where also his works attracted the eyes of the critic and received appreciation from all quarters.

His next paintings were the depiction of the priests of the Jagannath Temple of Puri in an impressionistic style. Like

Abanindranath he generally loved very much to get himself confined to their own house. His visit outside Calcutta was mostly limited to Darjeeling, Rishi and the sea beach of Puri. Among these places Puri he visited several times. In this must have inspired him in painting the temples and other notable places around. The romanticism even in this limited movement was enough to convey his thirst for far away things.

A magnificent example of Gaganendranath's imaginative power may be observed in his 'Himalaya series'. In his painting 'Kanchanjangha' his imagination succeeded in scaling the height of a mountain but in romantic imagination he worked out an upturned face of Lord Shiva like serenity in the skyline of 'Kanchanjangha'.

In his painting, 'The Boat and the River,' Gaganendranath has portrayed a typical scene of the river Padma and a boat that reminds us about the Padma —

the famous home-boat and a prized possession of the poet, Rabindranath Tagore. In this painting the artist has created an inexpressible spirit of the river scene which penetrates through our minds and reminds us the early short stories and bunch of letters that Rabindranath wrote on board the "Padma".

In the next stage we find Gaganendranath as a successful cartoonist and satirical artist caricaturing the evils of Bengali society. This was bold in conception and his artistic talent was discovered in a new vision.

He has drawn hundreds of cartoons with simple fun and humours depicting the modern society of Bengal. With penetrating vision he has exhibited all aspects of the Bengali life depicting their flaws and blunders of everyday life under the influence of the so-called Anglo-Bengali culture.

His cartoons can be classified under four heads—political, social, religious and educational. A number of them were published in the form of two Albums and one of them is called 'Virup Vaira' (Strange Thunderbolts). He left behind about 500 cartoons but many of them are feared to have been perished or lost. The range of his pictorial criticism includes all the facets of our life, and sometimes he did not hesitate to include in his criticism the distinguished personalities of contemporary period like Acharya Pratulla Chandra Ray, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Ashutosh Mukherjee and others. But in spite of his making so many cartoons he did not exhibit them in the annual exhibitions of the Indian Society of Oriental Art where many of his other works were regularly being exhibited. However it was only in the year 1917 that thirteen of his cartoons were exhibited. Many of them were of course, published in the

PAINTINGS OF GAGANENDRANATH TAGORE

'Modern Review' and the 'Pia hachi'

The chief characteristic of Gaganendranath's cartoon is that some of them are crowded with many figures and that in some of them a description in words will be found, which are seldom found in any European cartoon. This was perhaps done with the idea that the average people of the then Bengal had very little training in the language of pictorial art, especially the cartoon and the words were written on the cartoon to make the people appreciate the picture.

Even after a lapse of so many years, these cartoons have not lost their value as a medium of expression of contemporary social life of Bengal. As for example, in his cartoon captioned

Setting Fire to the University the artist writes: *Tomar ba chane Anek Bal, Kaje Kichin Nahiko Lale* (You say a lot of rubbish but you produce nothing practically). In this picture the students of the University are seen attempting to set fire on books and boycott the University. In the picture we can easily recognise Deshabandhu (R. Das) with his spectacle and cigar. Here again we can see in his cartoon a Bengalee lady dressed in clumsy saris and high heel shoes dancing with an Englishman. This undoubtedly exhibits the existing deviation of the Bengali society.

Gaganendranath had a hobby of lithography too. Due to heavy demand of his cartoon production he opened a section in Vichitra Club. He purchased a second hand Lith machine and engaged a Muslim printer. In the morning he would paint a caricature and would transfer it to some stone in the afternoon and supervise it in the printing the same day. This helped him in increasing the number of his cartoons.

The next chapter of his career opened with a brilliant series of colour drawings illustrating the life of Shri Chaitanya. The figures in this series were done

in "fine-drawing with charming realism and imagination, with a background of soft tone and limited delicate colours. Here the Bengali saint has been expressed with full of reverence and intimacy. In his painting "Chaitanya's Emancipation" he has exhibited Chaitanya with a shaved head performing the usual seated on a clay altar under the shade of red canopy. Around him are his disciples, and all of them surprisingly with the faces and features of Tagores.

In the next phase of his career, Gaganendranath is seen as a landscape painter starting with the house top of this great city and followed by the paintings of Bengal village when his questing eyes travelled from the fields to meadows the rows of palm coconut the

village 'in the evening' and so on. These landscapes have been executed with simple charm and penetrating vision. Most of these works have been executed in black and white in Chinese ink medium.

After the first World War an exhibition of German painters was held in the hall of Indian Society of Oriental Art. This exhibition of rare collections was visited by a few Indian artists. But Gaganendranath was perhaps a lone exception who visited the exhibition every now and then to study the experiments made in the contemporary European paintings.

Next we find Gaganendranath's attention in Cubism in his paintings, but without any way imitating the formulae and



'Pali-Devula'

PAINTINGS OF GAGANENDRANATH JAGORE



conventional cubists. His attempt proved a remarkable success with full of original interpretation of the doctrine of cubism. Gaganendranath composed his painting not by breaking up form but stuck to an original method of synthetic cubism in which the diverse facets of a subject were skilfully woven in, which

created spiritual contents with romance and mystery. It was not achieved by any cub of the Western world. He variably used Indian mode particularly Indian women in series of composition with mystical meaning and significance with skilful manipulation of light and shade and with actuality and realism

which had earlier never been tried by any Western artist.

His pictures of exquisite charm and individuality acquired the place in the Indian exhibitions, which were held in Berlin and Hamburg in 1923, and the modernistic idea and expressionistic outlook of the artist were highly acclaimed by the general public, the critics and art lovers there.

In 1927 an exhibition comprising 65 Indian Paintings was sent to the U.S.A. under the initiative of Prof. O. C. Ingols. The exhibition travelled through 68 cities. Three of Gaganendranath's pictures were included in the exhibition, and these attracted appreciative attention of one and all everywhere.

In 1934 an exhibition of Modern Indian Art was held in New Burlington Gallery, London, where Gaganendranath's works earned tremendous applause from all quarters including *The Times* (December 10, 1934).

The uncommon versatility of Gaganendranath has still to be properly evaluated for till to-day there has been no organized movement to fish out and collect together his entire works scattered here and there. It will be the best reverential acknowledgment to this calm and quiet going genius if the artists and art lovers, conceive and collect together his entire works, build a museum and preserve this national treasure for research workers of all times to come.



Seats Of Learning In Ancient India

SHAMSUDDIN



THE history of ancient Indian education is taken to extend from 2000 B.C. to 1200 A.D. Ancient India did not have the same characteristics, socially and educationally throughout this period. Therefore we sub-divide it as follows:

- (i) 2000 to 1000 B.C. the Vedic period
- (ii) 1000 to 200 B.C. the Upanishadic period
- (iii) 200 B.C. to 500 A.D. the Dharma-shastric period and
- (iv) 500 to 1200 A.D. the Puranic period

In the Vedic period, society was very simple. Idol worship was unknown. Men and women had equal rights. The caste system had not taken shape. Practically every one was his own teacher, his own warrior, his own farmer and agriculturist.

In the Upanishadic period society began to be divided gradually into groups and this grouping started with the Vedas. The Dharma-shastric period saw a good deal of activity in art, literature, mathematics and dramatics. Sanskrit had become a classical language. The language of popular communication was Prakrit. The caste system had become rigid. Women did not enjoy the same freedom as before.

The Pauranic period, re-

ally speaking, is the period of the Buddhists so far as education is concerned. The universities of Nalanda and Vikramashila were Buddhist institutions. Their language was Pali. Institutional education began for the first time in the Pauranic period.

In the schools of ancient India no student who earnestly desired to be educated was ever disappointed. Teachers did not deliberately hide any technical knowledge from their students. Shukracharya the preceptor of the 'Dattas' is represented as having taught to his bitterest enemy's son, Kacha, the art of reviving the dead. In the Mahabharata Drona the famous archer could not hide anything he knew of the art of archery from Dhishhtadyumna though he knew that this disciple would kill him one day.

The Guru and the pupil lived together. They had the greatest affection for each other; their love was just like the love of father and son. The students used to live in the teacher's house which was known as the Gurukula.

In the Gurukula, the student had to shun all comforts. He had to go to bed after the Guru. The life in the Gurukula was well disciplined, and at times very hard. From the point of view of needs, both

teachers and the taught were satisfied. As the teacher did not live in luxury neither did he lead a life of want. The problem of indiscipline arose very rarely and, since it was not frequent, punishments were not needed. There was a code for all sorts of activities.

The education provided in universities like Takashila, Nalanda, Kanchi, Siddhantakataka, Vikramashila and Banaras was thoroughly liberal. Students were provided with free boarding, lodging and clothing. There was generally a keen competition between the villagers in giving their mite for the village school.

Besides this they donated without hesitation for the benefit of education, at times of marriages, thread ceremonies, etc. The teacher not only provided knowledge to the students but also raised funds from the villagers for the benefit of the students. In times of crisis, the Guru might approach kings with a request to help the Gurukula. The Guru did not refuse to teach any student, provided the student was fit to receive instruction.

Their method of teaching was predominantly oral, not merely that, but individual also. Hearing, contemplation and practice were the main features of the method. There were

SEATS OF LEARNING IN ANCIENT INDIA

few books, the Vedas were not written. Everything was learnt by heart. Their conviction was "If knowledge is in books, it is like money lent to others."

At a time the Guru had fifteen or twenty students and only so much was taught at a time as the pupil could easily learn. Whatever was taught was learnt by the student on the same day. Unless the first lesson was fully learnt no further lesson was given. Sometimes older students were required to teach younger students. The teacher taught the older students at a fixed time of the day, and then the older taught the younger ones at some other time. It was possible, as the number of students and the number of subjects were small. In this way there was an apprenticeship to learning.

Our information regarding Nalanda comes from the Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Tsang who toured India from 673 to 687 A.D. He stayed at Nalanda for ten years. He copied sacred Buddhist work. According to him, the place was known as Dharmaganj. The University had three big buildings known as Ratnasagar, Ratnalandi and Ratnaranjak. Out of these, the middle one was a nine-storied building housing the library. In all there were eight halls and 300 apartments. Messing was common.

In every courtyard there was a well. Rooms were either single-seated or double-seated. Every student had a stone known as the 'Chabutra,' to sleep on. In every room there was a place for keeping lamps and books. There was great rush for admission. Not more than three

out of ten succeeded in getting admission. Even then there were 10,000 students and 1000 teachers and it continued for more than eight or nine centuries beginning from the second century A.D. The institution was financed out of grants in the shape of lands. There were as many as two hundred villages assigned to the Gupta Kings for the maintenance of the University. Since it was a Buddhist institution the head was a monk, and the teachers were *Bhikkhus*. Strangely enough the study of Sanskrit was compulsory.

To Indian universities came students from far-off lands like China, Tibet, Java, Sumatra, Korea, Greece, Iran and Arabia to quench their thirst for learning. They stayed in the universities for more than ten years, and specialized in logic, medicine and astronomy. It is quite obvious that the Indian universities must have had a high standard to attract students from foreign lands when facilities for travelling were so meagre. The standard of these universities can be judged from the stay of the famous doctor Ishaq (who attended on emperors and whose fee was a figure of not less than eight digits) at Takshashila for seven years, specializing in medicine. Even after his long stay when he left the University, he thought that he was lacking in adequate knowledge of medicine. In those days theoretical knowledge alone had no value. The doctor with theoretical knowledge alone was regarded as resembling an ass, conscious of the quantity and not the

quality of the load on its back.

Practical training in pharmacy and surgery was insisted upon by legislative action before a doctor could set up a practice. Strabo the Greek historian had certified the fact that Indians were great physicians and that they were specially good at curing snake-bites. Inexperienced candidates were given practice in surgery, under the most experienced and specialized teachers. Only proficient surgeons were allowed to operate for intestinal displacements, deep cranial abscesses, cata-act, hydrocele or the removal of a still-born child from the uterus. The patients were made insensitive to pain by an overdose of wine.

Not only human beings but even animals were given perfect medical aid. For the first time in the history of the world, Asoka the Great built veterinary hospitals duly equipped with all necessary medicines.

Similarly ambulance cars were also utilized to remove the injured soldiers from the battlefield. We do not find the name of any such conveyance in European history before the commencement of the Crimean War. Not only this, even the services of Indian doctors like Manaka and others were requisitioned by Khalifa Harun-al-Rashid of Baghdad when he was seriously ill and Arab physicians had lost all hopes of curing him. After recovery the Khalifa himself requested Manaka to stay with him and translate Ayurvedic works into Arabic. He also desired to invite Indian lady doctors and midwives to write

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text-books for his medical colleges

The Takashashala University was at its zenith as regards medical studies even in the early centuries of the Christian era. Similarly, the famous University of Ujjain had specialists in mathematics and astronomy and was famous for having established a great observatory. In Southern India, there was a famous educational centre at Kanchipuram.

Instances of life-long Brahmacharya (celibate life devoted to high learning) were quite common in Nalanda. Megasthenes had quoted instances of Brahmans who studied for as many as forty-eight years. They studied Logic, Vyakarana (grammar) and philosophical subjects.

There were equal opportunities for all. There was no distinction between the rich and the poor. The prince and the peasant got the same kind of education from the same Guru. The pupilage of Dhona and Drupada, in the Mahabharata, is a striking example of this type.

To conclude, education was free and broad-based. For the upkeep of the universities, donations and endowments were made by foreign as well as Indian rulers. The ultimate aim of education was the emancipation of the soul. 'Action is important' was their belief. Action devised by oneself and self-control guide life towards emancipation. Education was influenced by the

general principles of life. Learning for base purposes was strictly prohibited. Every individual was induced to serve the community, irrespective of caste or creed or his needs like a doctor who while treating forgot whether the disease was contagious or whether he would get his fee or not. In conversations high ideals were insisted upon both in the teacher and the taught. The teachers prayed for the glory of their students so that they might earn good name and fame for themselves as well as for their teachers. For such times Yaska had defined a true scholar in the words of the goddess of learning, Saraswati. 'Protect me, and I will be thy cherished treasure.'



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day 127

{About 140 years ago, in April 1830, Richard Aimes, an indigo planter in Nadia district, Bengal was allegedly murdered by George Yonge, manager of a rival factory in the neighbourhood. The trial of Yonge in the Supreme Court of Calcutta created great sensation among the British community because both the accused and the victim were Englishmen. Surprisingly, or perhaps expected by George Yonge who was tried by a British judge and British jury was acquitted while nearly a dozen of his native accomplices were sentenced to life imprisonment or hard labour for 14 to 7

RICHARD Aimes was vaguely worried. The indigo crop was of course good and the proprietor Mr Ebenezer Thomson of the Avoria factory of which he was the overseer, was satisfied with his work. The natives called him Dick sahib and obeyed and feared him. The children in the house—he had too many of them how many he did not even know—were a nuisance. But his two Bengali mistresses, *Gouri Anund* and *Kala Anund* (which literally mean 'fair-complexioned pleasure' and 'dark-complexioned pleasure') were good in bed. He was a full-blooded and passionate man of 35, fond of good food drinks and women as Englishmen of his tribe were in those days but he was not in the habit of getting drunk. He was a good swordman and could wield a lathi as expertly as any native. He

who killed RICHARD AIMES

SANTOSH BAGCHI

had also an army of lathis at his command and a room in his house had been kept full of lathis, spears, swords and all sorts of weapons.

So I am not afraid of that rascal Yonge. Dick probably said to himself as he pulled at his *hookla* after dinner reclining on an arm chair in the verandah of his bungalow. His two women were sitting on the floor near him chattering in native dialect, about things that did not enter his head. The brats were making noise inside a room. Shut up banchoots. Dick shouted in anger. The women ceased talking only to continue in low whisper immediately after.

The night was warm and windless. It was 8th April 1830. Somewhere in the distance *gajan samyasis* were beating drums and uttering strange cries shattering the stillness of the night. 'I'll teach him a lesson he won't forget.' Dick probably muttered to himself in anger. George

Yonge was manager of the neighbouring Katlamaree factory owned by Mr Watson. A few days ago they had fought over a piece of land and on both sides some native heads had been broken. And then probably his thoughts turned to a woman. As he fancied himself to be in bed with her his anger against Yonge who was in the way, mounted higher.

An owl hooted. A dog barked. Sounds of fallen leaves and twigs being trampled under human feet made him alert. Then suddenly out of darkness emerged a large number of men armed with lathis and swords and pounced upon Dick. A white man sitting on a horse shouted the orders. When *Gouri Anund* cried for mercy that man threw a spear which struck her head and made her fall prostrate on the ground. Dick could offer no resistance. He was seized and forcibly carried away. Dick's son, 10-year old Richard, ran to the bazar shouting

for help. But nobody cared, since it was a business of the sahibs.

The following morning Kala Anund saw Mr. Thomson, Dick's employer, and told him of the outrage. Mr. Thomson was shocked but as he was not a very energetic sort of person, four days passed before he reported the fact of Dick's disappearance to the Magistrate. The Magistrate directed Mohummud Suleem, Nazir of the Nuddea Fouzdary court to investigate the matter. About hundred yards from George Yonge's tent (the house was being repaired so Yonge was living in a tent) the Nazir observed a spot which seemed to have been recently disturbed. He asked his men to dig, but on digging found the carcass of a dead horse. Then he went to the cow-house of the Katlamaree factory and there probing about with a spear found a soft spot. The plate was dug and about two cubits below the surface was found some human hair of reddish colour with a piece of scalp attached to it. Izzutoolah and Dhun Mullick who knew Dick and were present there and also Dick's mistress at once confirmed that it was his hair. Dick's body however could not be found. George Yonge and his suspected accomplices were arrested on a charge of murder and sent for trial.

Under the heading "Murder at an indigo plantation" *John Bull*, a Calcutta paper of the time wrote: "Letters received from Jessore district contain details regarding a most heinous murder committed by one indigo planter's assistant on the assistant of a neighbouring

planter through the instrumentality of a hired band of ruffians ripe for any villainy. One letter which we have seen enters very fully into the particulars of this outrage and cold blooded deed of horror. We forbear saying more on the matter, as it has become the subject of judicial investigation although we are sorry to understand it is apprehended that considerable difficulties will be found in the way of bringing the offenders whether principal or accessories to justice, for want of evidence. The occurrence is said to have taken place about the 20th of April under circumstances of the most atrocious cruelty and unheard of barbarity. The letters that have reached us are most circumstantial in their details and describe a deed of sanguinary savageness almost unparalleled in the annals of human depravity—11th May, 1880. (The letter writers were wrong both about the place and date of murder.)

A detailed account of the trial of George Yonge in the Supreme Court of Calcutta is found in an old number of *Asiatic Journal*. A brief summary of the lengthy report is given below.

August 13 and 14. George Yonge was indicted for the murder of Richard Aines alias Dick on the 8th April last at the Avoory indigo factory near Krishnagar. The Advocate General (Mr. John Peniston) stated the case describing the violent and recurring quarrels between the two factories (obviously to suggest a motive for the crime) he went on to relate the incident of the night. On coming to the door, the Advocate General

said, the prisoner (George Yonge) ordered his men to go into the house and seize Dick, which they did, and dragged him out tying a cloth round his mouth and in this manner conveyed him to the prisoner's factory a distance of five miles, the prisoner's people all the while beating him with bamboos. At the time these people seized Dick, one of the females entreated for mercy when the prisoner seized a spear headed with iron and threw it at the unfortunate woman which struck her in the forehead and prostrated her on the ground. The prisoner and his people having conveyed Dick to the factory at Katlamaree, threw him on the ground and the prisoner ordered three or four of his people to beat him with shoes and whips, which they accordingly did and while in this state the prisoner jumped upon Dick's body and trampled on him and then called for lions to mark him with. Some of the people upon this observed: "The man is dead there is no use in marking him." The prisoner said: "Well bring him to the tent." The body was accordingly taken into the tent and that was the last of it which the witnesses saw.

The Advocate General also produced as evidence the human hair dug up in Yonge's cowhouse and identified as Dick's. He would not ask, he said what was become of the body, but was the man dead when last seen at the tent of the prisoner?

The prosecution produced an array of witnesses. Mr. Thomson, proprietor of the Avoory factory deposed that Aines was in his em-

WHO KILLED RICHARD AINES ?

ploy. Kolynauth Roy has indigo factories about four miles from witness's. There had been serious disputes between Kolynauth Roy's people and the witness's, they had been continually quarrelling. There had been no serious quarrel since 1825 although there had been some broken heads since Aime was a hard-working, faithful servant, but a little cracked. The prisoner was once in witness's employ, he had been discharged in July last.

Kala Anund, Dick's native mistress, deposed that on the day of the crime Dick had returned from the Mollepara factory where he had been to fight Yonge over whom though assisted by Kholly Babu's people, he had prevailed. There had been a dispute about indigo lands. He remained at home till four *dandahs* of the night (three days before the end of *Chaitra* (8th April). He was sitting in the verandah when Mr Yonge and his writer *Thia*, and 150 persons came but no other Europeans. Mr Yonge had a *ceese* in his hand, and the others had spears. They came from behind the house to the front and some surrounded it to prevent their escaping. Mr Yonge said, 'Take hold of the hanchoot whatever it may cost I will pay. Some of them entered the house, and took hold of Aime's and some plundered the house. Mr Yonge who kept on his horse called for a spear and struck *Gara Anund* in the forehead. Then these persons took Dick away.

Gara Anund, the other mistress of the deceased, confirmed what *Kala Anund* had said and stated

that the next day they both went to the factory of Mr. Thomson and told him of the incident. She also identified the hall as Dick's.

Richard Dick son of the deceased, a boy of about 10 years, was sworn. He could not speak English. He stated that after his father had eaten, he dressed witness to fill a *chillum* and when he returned the house was filled with people, who seized his father. Witness went to the *bazar* and gave *dohay* (cry for help).

Mr Shaw Magistrate of Zillah Nuddea stated that there were frequent disputes among the indigo planters of the station, attended with much violence. The prisoner surrendered voluntarily.

It should be noted that the natives implicated in this case were at first not presented in the Supreme Court because as the Advocate General explained since they were natives they would be tried for this offence by the Zillah court. But the Chief Justice Sir Charles Edward Grey, ordered that because they were in the service of a European they should be brought to the court either as prisoners or witnesses.

The prisoner offered a written defence which was read by the Clerk of the Crown. He emphatically denied the crime imputed to him, because he said he had no motive or provocation to commit murder. He also referred to the habitual perjury of the natives of India and said that the whole thing was a devilish conspiracy by his enemies to deprive him of life. He asked the jury if they were quite sure that Dick was not still living and hiding

somewhere, just to put him in trouble. He also cited instances of men supposed to have been killed, but appearing afterwards when innocent men had already been convicted for murder.

The Chief Justice then summed up the case. Although his opinion was decidedly loaded against the accused he pointed out that the two sets of evidence were highly conflicting and totally irreconcilable. So, he said, the jury have the dreadful task of deciding on which side the horrible perjury lies. The brutality of the crime will leave no scope of mercy if the prisoner is convicted, but if the jury have a feeling that may disturb their conscience hereafter they should acquit him.

The jury retired, and after an absence of fifteen hours returned to court and delivered the verdict of not guilty. The twelve natives who were tried in the Zillah court for complicity in the crime were however not as fortunate as Mr Yonge. Three of them *Peet Allee Nanye Nundan* and *Saituk Bi-was* were imprisoned for life, while nine others were sentenced to terms of 14 and seven years imprisonment.

Perhaps because the murdered man was also a European the acquittal of Yonge did not quite please the *sahib* community of Calcutta. *John Bull* said that regarding the circumstances that have come to light on the trial, we can have no hesitation in saying that the public peace and tranquillity of the district of Kishnagar will be best promoted if he is not again placed in a situation to disturb them. (According to some accounts

WHO KILLED RICHARD AIMES?

Yonge was deported from India the East India Company at that time had the power to deport undesirable Europeans from the country.) So the matter ended there.

But did it really end? Richard Aimes was no doubt murdered by Yonge and his men. But what happened to his body? In spite of a thorough search no trace of it could be found. And again what could be the motive of George Yonge? The prosecution stressed the fact that there was a violent dispute between the two parties over land which however was denied not only by the defence but also by Mr. Thomson, proprietor of the Avoorv factory who said there had been no serious dispute during the preceding five years. And even if there was a dispute such disputes were common in those days and did not explain the savage rage and blind hatred which impelled Yonge to kill a comrade-in-arms by literally trampling him under the foot.

These questions continued to fatigue the mind of several Englishmen long after the incident was forgotten by others. In 1870, forty years after the crime Thacker Spink & Co published the third edition of Dr. Chevers' famous book on Indian Medical Jurisprudence which contained some analytical comment on the murder of Richard Aimes. Dr. Chevers strongly criticized the Supreme Court for acquitting Yonge about whose guilt he was thoroughly convinced. And after giving an account of the crime he quoted a commentator as saying: 'Perhaps if the carcass of the

dead horse had been closely examined, the murderer's man might have been discovered within.'

An identical conclusion about miscarriage of justice (the jury who had declared Yonge not guilty' also complained to the Chief Justice along with their verdict that 'the prosecution had not procured or produced all the available evidence that could have established Yonge's guilt) and about possible concealment of the corpse inside the body of the horse was also arrived at by Dr. Robert Reid, well-known Calcutta detective in his book *Remarkable Criminal Trials in Bengal* published in 1876. Reid might have taken his cue from Dr. Chevers, but the opinion of an expert like him lends additional credence to the body-in-the-horse theory.

But the problem of motive which is important in all murders still remained unsolved. In 1910 one Mr. Crawford long interested in the peculiar nature of the old time crime decided to make some on-the-spot sleuthing. His brother was at that time manager of Shikarpi indigo factory in the immediate neighbourhood of which the murder had been committed 50 years ago. With the help of his brother Mr. Crawford collected the local versions of the murder story from the old inhabitants of Shikarpi. One of them was Gadadhar Bagchi who although born a year after the crime had heard the story from his father and others involved in the crime. The other was Nohin Chandra Sarkar 65, a relation of Panchananda Biswas *muhurir* of Katla-

maree factory, who had been implicated in the murder.

Gadadhar Bagchi's story was that coming to know that Dick's mistress had expressed a wish to see *haral puja*, Yonge—who was in most unfriendly terms with Dick—dressed up a number of lathials as *nayan sanyasis* and sent them around the village to perform. When they came before Dick's house all members of his family, including Dick came out to see the performance. Then suddenly the lathials seized Dick and carried him off to Yonge's tent to murder him there. According to another version of the story it was Dick's mistress who plotted with Yonge to seize Dick during *charal puja*. As regards the body Gadadhar said when the Magistrate's men came to investigate, and dug up the carcass of the horse Yonge got frightened and as soon as those men left the body was removed from inside the horse and thrown into the Padma river close by. So when the Magistrate's men getting a hint again came and cut up the dead horse they did not find anything inside except a few strands of hair similar to those of Dick's. (The court did not accept the evidence of the pair).

But an interesting clue about the motive was provided by Nohin Chandra Sarkar. He said Yonge's sister had a liaison with Dick, which explains Yonge's savage determination to murder Dick and also Dick's betrayal by his active mistress. Thus, Mr. Crawford concludes, was a powerful and convincing motive for the murder of Richard Aimes.

Dr. Annie Besant — Dynamic Organiser

R K BHATNAGAR

DR Annie Besant was a dynamic woman organiser the world has known. There have been other remarkable women before and after her but none had the genius and the capacity for organising institutions and movements parallel to her. She gave to every cause she espoused its utmost momentum to ever achieve its amplest expression.

She lived a life of many phases—in religion, humanitarianism and social reforms, in occultism and mysticism, in education and above all the fight for the freedom of India.

Originator of the use of the word Commonwealth, Dr. Besant was always keen on India becoming a self-governing partner of the British Commonwealth of Nations. She gave new life a new vision and a new hope when in 1919 she developed the idea of holding a national convention to draft the Commonwealth of India Bill. The Constituent Assembly in 1946 did the work of drafting the Constitution of India on the lines conceived by her earlier.

Dr. Annie Besant was born in London on October 1, 1847. Her mother was of pure Irish descent and her father William P. Wood was Irish on his mother's side. She received her early education under Miss Marriot, the sister of

the famous novelist Captain Marriot. At the age of 14 she went to Germany and from there to France. On her return to England she married in 1867 Rev. Frank Besant, a young Cambridge man who was at that time a Deacon in a small mission church.

In January 1869, a son was born to her and in August 1870 a daughter. In 1872 both the children developed whooping cough,

an incident which was largely instrumental in transforming her from a Christian into an Atheist. She says in her Autobiography:

It was the long months of suffering through which I had been passing with the seemingly purposeless torturing of my little one as a climax that struck the first stunning blow at my belief in God as a merciful Father of men. The presence of pain and evil in a



Dr. Annie Besant

world made by a good God the pain falling on the innocent, as my seven months old babe, — lurid, hopeless hell—all these, while still believed, drove me desperate and instead of lil the devils believing at trembling I believed at hated All the hither dormant and unsuspected strength of my nature to up in rebellion I did not yet dream of denial, but would no longer kneel

Dr Besant soon came under the influence of Charles Voysey and Mr and Mrs Scott from whom she imbibed her ideas of free thought Mr Scott published a series of monthly pamphlets and to these Mrs Besant contributed her first free thought essay entitled On the duty of Jesus of Nazareth As she could no longer order her life on the strict church observance of her husband she obtained separation from him in 1873 She continued to do free thought propagandist work and issued pamphlets under the signatures of Ajax

The year 1882 marked a new epoch in the life of Dr Besant for it was in this year that she came into contact with Theosophy She received a request from an editor friend to review two volumes of 'The Secret Doctrine' written by H P Blavatsky As she turned page after page her interest became absorbing Her mind gradually picked up the truth and she felt that the light had been seen on and in that flash of illumination she knew that the weary search was over and the very truth was found With the death of Madame Blavatsky Mrs Besant became the greatest exponent of Theosophy It

ultimately brought her to India

Her work in India was the crowning glory of her life On November 16 1893 an auspicious day testified by a great astrologer Mrs Besant inaugurated her Indian tour with twelve lectures in Kandy Later she addressed gatherings at Tuticorin Bangalore Vijayawada and other places Her lectures drew large audiences and she went back the better for their listening to her unvalued oratory accompanied by great knowledge and sympathy in understanding

From the moment she set her foot on Indian soil she began to work for the all-round regeneration of the country While she was in Adyar she threw herself into the work of founding a school for backward communities Within a short time she spread a network of schools and colleges—the most important being the Central Hindu College at Benares which later became the Benares Hindu University She travelled about the country enlisting financial aid for the college and succeeded in getting seven Maharajas to take interest in the institution

The students in this college were not only taught the literature of the East and the West along with modern science but the teaching of ancient religion philosophy and ethics also formed an integral part of the syllabus The students in her hostels inter-dined with each other which was not permitted at that time

To demonstrate how keen was her attachment to India which she regarded as her Motherland and to help accelerate the pro-

gress of the country, she started a weekly paper 'The Commonwealth' in 1910 Not satisfied with a weekly paper she purchased 'The Madras Standard', a daily paper in 1914 and shortly renamed it 'New India' She possessed a lot of stamina and at the advanced age of 67 she not only took up the stupendous task of editing the daily paper but attended to her normal educational and theosophical work too

Within a short period the paper leapt into fame and achieved a popularity unsurpassed in the history of Indian journalism Dr Besant in her paper attacked Government vagaries and defects with the vigour and freedom characteristic of her As was common with other nationalist papers 'New India' soon earned official disavour

One of the objects to attain which 'New India' was founded is Dr Besant stated in laying down the policy of the paper was 'speedy attainment of the political ideal of New India by the Government by the inhabitants of India for Indians' Dr Besant was warned and her refusal to change her ways resulted in her internment in June 1916 The Government soon realised their mistake and released her

The action of the Government against her personally and the paper in the shape of demand and forfeiture of securities under the Press Act made her more popular and she was acclaimed as a martyr in the cause of India In recognition of her services, the nation unanimously elected her as the President of the Indian

National Congress in 1917
As the first woman President of the Congress she not only delivered an address and conducted the proceedings at Calcutta but kept her office alive by continuously functioning till the next session held at Bombay in 1918. During this period she carried on an incessant campaign on behalf of India.

Dr. Besant was punctual to a fault. She maintained punctuality not only in meetings, conferences but even at tea and lunch times. At the various meetings she used to come on time and sit patiently for hours while nothing was done. Very often at the Subjects Committee meetings after waiting for considerable time they dis-

sed, adjourning their meeting to the next day. At times, visibly irritated she used to say "I am beginning to understand why the British rule India?"

Dr. Besant believed in speed in achievement and so long as objective was gained she did not worry as to the details. It was in Delhi in 1927 at the All-Party Conference when no decision could be reached for the first two days tired with the usual slackness and inability to see the wood for the trees she said, "Gentlemen I do not think you are in earnest about getting Swaraj."

She was intensely Irish in the matter of wit which was particularly noticeable over coffee or tea cups which she took

quite often in a day. However, in her food habits she had become vegetarian after she came under the influence of Theosophy. Among the Indian food items she was particularly fond of samosa and the papad.

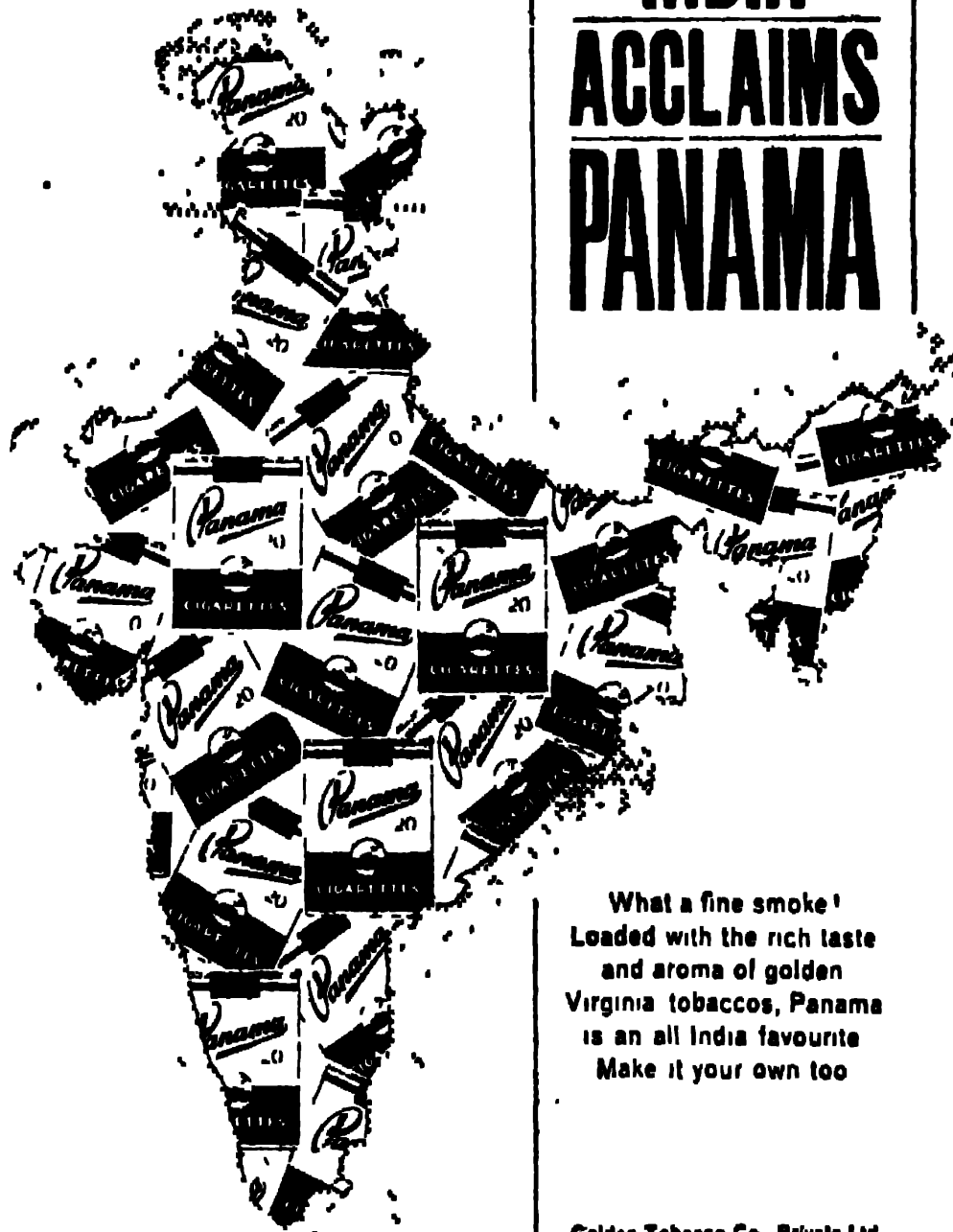
As days sped, she found that she was becoming unequal to the responsibilities she had shouldered. Within a few days of her eighty-seventh birthday, she breathed her last on September 20, 1933. As Mahatma Gandhi observed "As long as India lives the memory of the magnificent services rendered by Dr. Besant will also live. She endeared herself to India by making it her country of adoption and dedicating her all to it".



'ANRITYA' (Gujarat)

Artist: Indra Dugar

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Crisis in Civilisation

K. CHAUDHURI

I HAD all along a faith that a new civilisation will spring out of the heart of Europe. But today when I am about to quit this world that faith has gone bankrupt altogether. As I look around, I find the crumbling ruins of a proud civilisation strewn like a vast heap of tenuity.

Yet I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter when this cataclysm is over and the sky rendered clean by a spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn would come from this horizon from the East where the sun rises. The unvanquished man will then retrace his steps to retrieve his lost human heritage — these are the memorable words with which the sage of Santiniketan concluded his famous last testament issued almost from his deathbed.

That was in 1941. More than a quarter of a century has since elapsed. But alas, that dawn has not yet come! Man is still groping in the darkness. The occasional flashes of light to which he has turned from time to time with the fond hope that they will illumine his path have proved to be merely will-o-the-wisp!

True man has linded on the moon. He has planted a number of symbols of his scientific technological feat on the breast of the enigmatic Venus at a fantastic distance of 40 million kilometers. He is transplanting human hearts converting dreary deserts into flowering gardens. He has many other awe-inspiring and spell-binding scientific and technological

wonders to his credit. But, what about the intrinsic man? Has he overcome his deformities and distortions? The ingrained stupidities and bestial susceptibilities? The contradiction between his intellectual advance and emotional conservatism? The answer is tragically No.

Human dignity is still trampled underfoot. Emancipation of woman is still a far



cry. Communalism, racialism, national chauvinism, dogmatism, fanaticism and such other barbarity of the 'civilised' continue to hold their undiminished sway. Short sightedness and downright opportunism are paraded as 'pragmatism' and 'practical politics'. Immediate gains cloud the vision that their inevitable consequences are fatal. Man kills man at the slightest provocation. Repressive measures and military interventions have never solved any real human problem. Yet such actions are regarded as midwives of history. In short, there is no sign that man has started re-

tracing his steps. Consequently, one cannot help wondering 'Man, Quo Vadis?'

Confronted with the crisis, spiritualists are prone to lay the blame at the door of science and technology. In their opinion science has by and large failed to ensure progress of civilisation. Instead it is only bringing sensual pleasures to the ever increasing desires of man. And in the process, science is aggravating the evils. It is handing over to man newer and newer weapons of exploitation and destruction. Instead of being the kindly light in the temple of divinity it has for all practical purposes become hell fire in the dark chamber of devil.

Spiritualists would also appear to suggest that it is no use whetting man's sensual desires which have no limit. They seem to claim that although enough damage has already been done, salvation can still be achieved. For this purpose man's attention is to be firmly drawn towards spiritual pursuits and self-abnegation. Which means that man must put a curb on his material requirements and at the same time, learn the virtues of slowly abjuring carnal pleasures with a view to discovering his true self, i.e. identification with divinity.

The difficulty, however is that the consciousness that can sustain a true spirit of self-abnegation arises only at a certain variable stage of satisfaction—not before that. Even Gandhiji had to declare that God does not dare appear before the hungry except in the form of food. Swami Vivekananda too has expressed

CRISIS IN 'CIVILISATION'

almost the same sentiments by calling upon man to serve the downtrodden instead of searching for a religious road to heaven.

The obvious conclusion is that fulfilment of material needs to a variable degree is not detrimental but conducive to the flowering of spiritualism provided the consciousness is generated at the right moment.

The argument may be advanced that material well-being is not ignored. What is decried is the encouragement to a craze for higher living standard. Such a rabid race for a higher living standard is surely a corrosive evil. But the snag is 'Who is to draw the line of demarcation and how to draw it?' Where is the universally applicable standard?

Since there is no satisfactory answer, material progress cannot be halted. Nor is it desirable, particularly because the vast majority of world population are still carrying on their existence as sub-human species. So material progress is unavoidable and, for this purpose, progress of science is also a *sine qua non*.

Now, the materialists would seem to have scored the point. But what is the use? They may have an edge over the spiritualists. They may go ahead with their science and technology in the belief that they will be able to wipe out every tear from every eye, do away with class-conflicts and all disparities among regions and nations. It is also unavailable that they have conquered many 'impossibles', that they have smashed the barrier between imagination and reality at least in technological progress. They may also claim that they are poised for an adventure of unimaginable potentialities—the one in the endless outer space. The thrill of this latest adventure, they may believe, will, by one single stroke, raise man's stature to a superhuman

height. The day is, therefore, not remote they may assert, when all the evils that have been haunting man from the dawn of history will be buried for ever.

But, if past experience is any guide, all these assertions will fail to allay the fear that we are merely running after a mirage! Who can forget that splitting of atom has not realised the dream of great scientists but has on the contrary, unleashed an evil incarnate—the monstrosity of which has led its creators to heartrending self-condemnation? In the past at every phase of such miraculous discoveries or inventions man's earlier hopes for peace and progress had been dashed to the ground. The same forces which brought about such disappointments continue to operate till today. Science and technology, the modern Aladdin's Lamp may place at our disposal all the material affluence and physical pleasures that we may possibly dream of, but, as already discussed, such affluence and pleasures cannot cure the venereal malady from which man has been suffering.

One is, therefore, driven to the inevitable question: Then, what is to be done?

We have started with Tagore. Let us again turn to him to see if he has furnished any answer. The most remarkable and original contribution made by Tagore, as a social thinker and worker, to a nation in ferment and a world in tumult is his twin experiments with Sriniketan and Santiniketan.

Sriniketan is a model for organising a new, balanced and self-governing social order based on cooperative economic principles. (Readers may recall the radio broadcast, on the occasion of Tagore's Birthday Centenary, made by the then Dy. Governor of R B I in which he said with reference to Sriniketan that the Poet was fifty years ahead of us.) A rural reconstruction scheme, planned

and implemented as far as practicable with the limited resources at the Poet's command, in an enclaved country, Sriniketan experiment symbolises Tagore's efforts for economic advancement of the deprived multitude. He was not the mystic saint to curse an ever rising living standard of mankind and its modern vehicle—science and technology. He has clearly said—'Liberation through renunciation is not for me. The name—Sriniketan (Abode of Wealth)—itself indicates that the experiment was meant for production and appropriation of wealth on an equitable basis to meet the ends of social justice. He was however conscious that no socio-economic experiment for ushering in a self-regulating social order inspired by humanistic ideals could reach its envisaged consummation without a simultaneous drive for converting fragmented, distorted and self-oblivious man into an integral man—a whole man—a Self-Realised man. For it is a truism that in all worldly enterprises, human factor is the most decisive factor. All laws and systems and disciplines are made and unmade by man.

It is for creating the integral man, the whole man that the Poet embarked upon his Santiniketan experiment. Santiniketan was not at all a whim or flight to fancy on the part of the Poet as many people aver. Tagore clearly realised that his scheme for creating 'integral man' could be put through only by means of an education system that would be basically different from what had been borrowed from the West. The Western system still in vogue, has reduced education into a commodity. Academic and training institutions are a sort of factories meant for mass-scale production of degree and diploma holders. The relationship between the teacher and the taught is no better than that between the seller and the buyer.

Students passing out from various types of institutions are comparable with finished products of factories in that the former too conform to certain groups of mechanically determined specifications. Budding flowers of humanity are 'kept confined within the narrow bounds of four walls and mercilessly punished by hurling at them brickbats of stereotyped lessons divorced from the realities of life and irrespective of individual urges and aptitudes. The so-called education or training in skills is pushed, like bitter pills down the throat of 'imprisoned' students, under coercion and compulsion.

The result is that we get large scale supply of degree and diploma holders to be engaged in various occupations and professions. They think or work mechanically. They sell their physical and mental labour with the sole purpose of earning money to meet their physical needs and trivial pleasures. And by so doing they testify to the truth of Sankaracharya's assessment that man cannot be distinguished from animal (*Paschadya Avasheshat*).¹ Because seeking drinking procuring seeking physical comforts are animal functions of man. These functions are performed under compulsion not by the free will of man. No doubt, there are honourable exceptions. But such exceptions only prove the truth.

There cannot, therefore, be any gainsaying that the Western system of education is, in the final analysis, useless for continuous progress of civilisation. Frequent turmoil in the so-called affluent societies under the influence of all sorts of 'isms' would support the contention eloquently.

In contrast, Santiniketan system brings students into the open—in the midst of Nature—so that they can get acquainted with the infinite mysteries and beauties of nature at their very formative stage of body and

mind. The treasure house of beauty in music and songs, dance and dramas, literature and fine arts and so on, is kept wide open to facilitate learning through recreation and exaltation. Although all subjects of humanities and science are taught emphasis on aesthetics is the hallmark of Santiniketan education. The teacher and the taught live within the same campus as in a family. They share the same mode of life, same joys and sorrows and in the process develop a sort of kindred spirit that finds satisfaction in giving and taking the very best in each without inhibition. Discipline is not imposed but generated by rousing a spirit of lofty mission.

Thus the atmosphere being replete with beauty and freedom of human spirit and joyous mutual cooperation in a congenial environment symbolising attitudes boundless and infinity, creativity becomes the keynote in the whole institution. The creative urge roused and increasingly invigorated in a young mind inspires him and constantly fills him with a delightful pain to create something original whatever the field of his mundane activity may be in future. The sublime bliss (*Anandam*) derived from his original creation gradually leads him to realise the truth in the motto that Tagore set for himself and his disciples, namely, *Yenuham Namitustvam Kima ham Tena Kuriam* (what shall I do with that which cannot give me the taste of Amritam)?

We have already explained that when a man remains engaged in fulfilling his physical needs and sensual comforts he functions as an animal. Because he works under the force of some compulsion—not according to his free will as a human being. But, when the truth in the motto just mentioned dawns upon a man, when his thirst for Amritam subordinates his all other desires he becomes the 'whole

man' for he no longer remains fragmented in his duality as human being and animal. He becomes self realised (i.e., *Aham Brahmasmi—I am the Creator*). And, once awakened with this glorious discovery of his true Self, he refuses to worship at the altar of any Supernatural Power or Superman or Super 'ism'—the exponents of which have so far exploited him to perpetuate the crisis in civilisation.

Now, what is this Amritam? We have it from Hindu mythology that Adityas and Dattas churned an ocean by using a huge mountain as churn staff and with the longest serpent named Anantanag or Vasuki. In course of churning, many weapons and arms, treasures and valuables in the shape of horse, elephant, jewels, etc., were received. Last of all rose from the ocean a jar filled with Amritam. By drinking this Amritam, the elixir vitae, Adityas attained divinity and immortality; they became gods. Dattas deprived of Amritam, remained mere mortals and turned into destructive forces, embodiments of evil.

But what is the 'rational kernel within the mystic shell' as Karl Marx has put it? Man has churned the ocean of knowledge with the help of his vast accumulation of experiences subjected to a long drawn analysis and investigation. He has then come to the conclusion that physical prowess, material wealth, theories on different subjects, philosophies and ideologies, all come and go. They all represent transitory truth (Tagore has expressed this idea in his inimitable style in the first stanza of his celebrated poem 'Shakti'—). In consequence, they cannot keep man permanently absorbed and satisfied. Discontent and dissatisfaction grow inevitably giving rise to conflicts and destructive forces. He has finally discovered that the only condition that can fill man with

CRISIS IN CIVILISATION

satisfaction is his absorption in creativity and the concomitant ecstasy (Anandam). This creativity ultimately leads him to the realisation that beauty is the only transcendental truth. Attainment of this ultimate truth is the Amritam which has made all the difference between gods and devils (Danyas).

Gods and devils as we find in Hindu mythology are equal in wealth, physical prowess, arms as well as skill in their use. While gods do not surrender to their lure but crave for something superior, devils remain enamoured with them and their further acquisition. The reason is that gods are creators; they can grant boons, i.e. they can create something original. Consequently, their thirst for Amritam immunises them from the spell of other attractions. But devils, not endowed with that gift, are unconscious about Amritam. They remain destructive and mortals and they perish.

It should perhaps be clear by now that what Hindu mythology has symbolically described as Amritam is consciousness about the ultimate truth. A reference to some ideal character, imaginary and real, would also bring into bold relief what

a difference the attainment of ultimate truth can make. Shree (Nataraj or Supreme Dancer), Krishna (Flute Player), Arjun (a master in music and dancing and dramatic art), Einstein, J. C. Bose, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Bertrand Russell, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu among others flash into our mind instantly. They are not only original creators in their own fields but also creators and votaries of beauty.

That the ultimate liberation of man lies in creative joy has been emphasised not only by Tagore but also by two other great modern humanists. They are Sri Aurobindo and Karl Marx, one belonging to the spiritualist school and the other materialist. Sri Aurobindo has held that man will have to pass through the stages of 'super mind' and 'supramental' to reach his ultimate goal, Anandam. Karl Marx too has visualised a classless society in which everybody will work according to his ability and will get according to his needs. In his opinion, such a social condition will enable the alienated man (i.e. the man who is alienated from himself) to have enough leisure for introspection and to restore himself to his

True Self, viz., that he will have to be a creator of joy and beauty. According to Marx, a self-realised man in a communist society will be absorbed in 'hunting or fishing in the morning, painting at noon and music in the evening' as production of material wealth will demand of him very little amount of labour.

Tagore however has tried to make a synthesis between the materialist and spiritualist philosophies by laying appropriate emphasis on material progress and simultaneous creation of the whole man through his two experiments symbolised by Sanketan and Santaniketan. No other humanist has perhaps tried such a synthesis. That this synthesis is essential for progress of civilisation has already been discussed.

It is now for thinkers, scholars and educationists to ponder over what Tagore has bequeathed, what we have done with that unique heritage and whether it continues to be worth our while to revive the experiments in their original spirit with necessary modifications to suit the changed circumstances, specially the problems thrown up by industrial advance.



SWIMMING RHYTHM,

Photo: SOUMITRI BANERJEE

Clay Modelling of Krishnagar

NANI GOPAL CHAKRABORTY

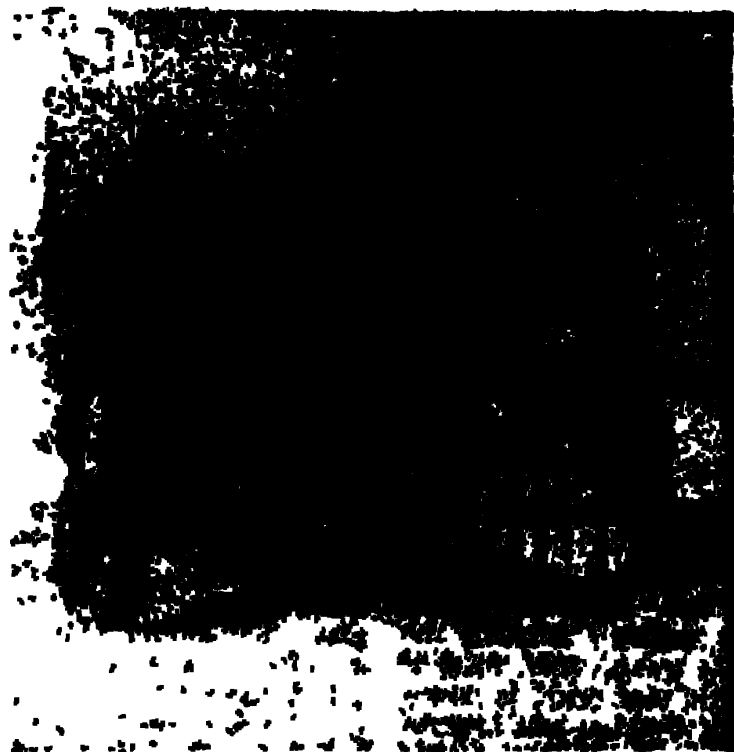
THE clay-modelling at Krishnagar is one of the finest handicrafts for which the State of West Bengal can feel justly proud.

Those who mould pitchers, jars and pots are strictly called potters. Those who make the images of gods or goddesses are in a sense painters. They are a class by themselves as they dabble colour on images.

The components of the image though mainly made of clay have other ingredients like sticks, rope and hay or straw. A base made of wood or bamboo with a pole raised from the base and the frame made with it forms the main structure of the image.

The head of the image is made with the help of moulds and after it is dried in the sun the head is placed in the frame followed by liberal clay plastering made over the straw and thus the other parts of the body take definite shape.

When the first coating of clay is laid, chaff or pite is mixed with the clay to prevent crack or break down of its parts. At the time of second coating right with joints are covered at the joints—such as the neck, the elbow, knee and the fingers of the doll or image. It is done after the fashion of the physicians when they



A festival scene in North India

Photo: SEAN DUFF

bandage their patient with the plaster of Paris.

When the image becomes dry and hard it is first painted white. Then other colours are applied on it with the help of brushes. In rainy days, if the image is to be completed in the scheduled time, now lamp is used to dry the clay.

The immersion of the huge images that we see at Krishnagar or Chandernagore during the Jagadhati Puja or at Nabadwip during the 'Risa' festival, is a difficult job. To tackle this problem since the images are of a plant growing in water or

marshy lands. As in to the ordinary fute it is lighter and thicker.

I have heard from one of the clay modellers in Krishnagar that divine inspiration is necessary to impart a godlike appearance to the face of the image. The artist said that he refrained from eating meat or fish during the week he was engaged in moulding the images of gods and goddesses.

Living in bed at nights often he used to think of the goddess and thus succeeded in visualising the face of the goddess.

The artist was a tired old man with burden of years. I asked him Do



A Kirtimukha

A Priest
Photo: SUNIL DEIT

you not make such images any more?

"I cannot concentrate my mind as before," replied the artist. Besides, no body wants that kind of image that could be made with devotion and inspiration. Now-a-days outward show is most important. People are now concerned more with splendour and money-making than with the image they worship. There are competitions even in worshipping the goddess. How can a man get that inspiration when his mind is so much disturbed?

'Now people place their orders,' he continued, 'with instructions to make images after specific patterns with controversial poses. But they forget the basic fact that the beauty of the Mother will reveal in the artist's mind—it cannot be made to order. A real artist will refuse work at the dictate of others.'

Artistic taste and skill are necessary to make the

hulo on the background. Finally the image is decorated with ornaments made of sola mix or fine clay. The *chhata* or *hulo*—a cloth plastered with clay—is dried followed by a pencil sketch on it before printing. The hair of the goddess or the mane of the lion are prepared from jute.

Some knowledge of anatomy, zoology and botany blended with inspiration are discernible in the modelling of man, animal, bird, fruits, flowers and other things.

In U.P. at Lucknow or at Allahabad the clay-modelling handicraft industry also flourishes. But the difference between the two Krishnagar and U.P. is poles apart. The articles are made with the help of moulds and they are of one colour while the articles of Krishnagar are made with the deft of hands and are decorated with different colours.

The modeller, rather the handicraft artist, cannot exhibit his skill in articles made with the help of moulds. The clay-modellers of Krishnagar depend on their natural skill. They apply this skill not only in producing the exact colours of things but also in presenting the muscular expressions of living bodies. A foreigner once saw a cobbler made by them and said, 'Do they go through the books of anatomy and psychology before they are called to their trade?'

The Krishnagar clay-modellers can bring out the outward expression of the artery and muscles so minutely that their works become beautiful products of art. They know best what part of the body expands or contracts in different moods of a man or a beast.

Fish can be made through mould or with hands. The modellers at Krishnagar make 'Katla' fish with the help of mould but the colouring is so effective that it looks like a real one. The long legs of the lobster are made with clay and thin wire. Deep or light colours are applied on the body of the lobsters to make them like real lobsters.

There are many stories regarding the skill of the clay-modellers of Krishnagar.

A bus at the stand was about to start for Nabadwip. The conductor was calling—Nabadwip, Nabadwip—A man in a hurry jumped into the bus. He had a dozen of lobsters in his hand. An orthodox

CLAY MODELLING OF KRISHNAGAR

'Gossain' of Nabadwip was in the same bus

The man got in and placed the lobsters on the tin-suitcase of the 'Gossain' and sat down with a sigh of relief. The 'Gossain' flew into rage and stood up. He slapped the man on the face and said, "Youascal, how dare you place the fish on my box? Have you no other place for them?"

Overwhelmed with joy the man touched the feet of Gossain and prayed, "Bless me Gossain—that others also may commit such mistake."

"What?"—retorted the Gossain. "Are they not really fish?"

The man was a famous clay-modeller of Ghurni, Krishnagar. He was gone to Nabadwip to present those clay-model lobsters to the Raja of Tipperah.

The clay-modellers of Krishnagar also make different kinds of fruits. The fruits are made on moulds. They are then dried and afterwards they are painted in such manner that they look like real fruits.

The clay-modellers of Krishnagar make spider, frog, cockroach, lizard and other insects in such a life-like manner that one may think them as real ones.

The clay-modellers of Krishnagar are also expert in making human figures and busts. Most of the figures kept in the museum at Calcutta are made by the modellers of Krishnagar. The modellers now residing at Kumartuli in

Calcutta originally migrated from Krishnagar.

A bust is a statue of a person's head, down to shoulder and chest. The life-size or statues in miniature form are also made by the modellers.

The full figures are of two kinds—one made on the mould and the other made with hands. The mould-made figures are baked but the hand-made figures are dried in the sun. The human figures—such as the figures of Rabindranath, Vivekananda, Netaji, Ramkrishna, A. R. Binda, Desbandhu, Jawaharlal, Gandhiji and others are moulded after they are made with hands. Then they are produced in a

large scale to meet the high demand of the market.

But the hand-made figures of clay—such as the cartman, cobbler, priest, fisherman and others are rather costly and they require fine skill and deep insight on the part of the modeller.

If you care to go to the stall of a clay-modeller, you will see—The wheels of a cart have been stuck into the mire, the cartman along with the bullocks are trying their utmost to pull them out. The fisherman is slowly going to cast his net, the priest is going to pluck flowers with a basket in his hand, the cobbler is work-



THE ARTIST

Photo: JUNIT DUTTA

CLAY MODELLING OF KRISHNAGAR

ing with his tools and so on.

To work out these figures, not only skill but patience is also greatly required. The hands and legs of these figures are made with the help of strong wires. The artist has to create the moulds of the figure in that miniature form.

The complete picture of the Bengali Society shown in various aspects—the labourers and peasants of Bengal—all have been depicted in their art.

Once a famous clay-modeller of Krishnagar made a full-size figure of his preceptor. The figure was in a sitting posture upon a stool in a room of his ashram.

One day a disciple came to see him. He saw his preceptor sitting there. He fell flat on the ground at his feet and then stood awaiting blessings from him. He waited and waited and at last he went outside and met a brother disciple and said with a sorrowful heart, "Brother, I have been waiting there for hours and hours together for blessing—but how is it that he did not utter a single word?"

"What?" the preceptor went to him a week ago," the brother disciple replied.

"Then who the man may be who resembled our preceptor and is now sitting in his room?"

The disciple living in the ashram understood that it was the clay-made figure which the other disciple had mistaken for the preceptor himself.

The modellers of Krishnagar can also fashion the images of Apollo, Jupiter, Mary, Jesus Christ and others after the style of the Italians.

Skill, deep insight, knowledge of anatomy and above all—practical knowledge in applying dyes are



A Katherman
From SUNIL DUTT

main reasons of their fame and success.

The greatest drawback of a clay-made thing, however beautiful it may be, is its brittleness.

In order to check this drawback, sometimes the clay-modellers use plaster of Paris in making the busts and use Kaolin in making other things.

Kaolin, in other words, called China-clay is made with silica, alumina, iron oxide, lime, magnesia and alkali. The quality of Kaolin depends on the

proportion of these things. The colour of pure Kaolin is white but when it is not pure its colour becomes grayish. The Kaolin we get after it is properly washed is as soft as clay.

Kaolin is found in the provinces of Gujarat, Bihar, Kerala, Mysore and in other places of India. The clay we get in Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura and other districts in Bengal is not suitable for making porcelain.

The first and foremost thing in clay-modelling is the preparation of clay. There should be no sand or stone-particles of clay. The finer the particles of clay, the better the articles can be made with it. The cause of the small holes in a pot is its having stone-particles in the clay. When the article is baked, these particles burn to shreds, leaving holes on the surface of the thing.

The clay-modellers of Krishnagar have the special skill in dyeing. Of course this skill depends on the modeller's experience and insight. The artist must minutely observe the different shades of colour of the fruits, flowers, animals and insects.

To make the colour fast, a paste from tamarind seed is prepared. The seeds are first fired, then they are pressed by a hammer or 'dhenki' and the hard coating on their outer shells is thrashed out. Then the white kernels are broken and converted into powder. This powder is mixed with water. The dye mixed with this paste will stick fast.

A PRAYER

CHITRITA DEVI

"*A Brahman brahmane brahma-
zarchasi Jayatani Vastre rajanyah
surasahyo itibyuddhi maharatho Jaya-
tam Dogdhi dhenurodhi nadiam
Asuh Saptih purandhi Isha I
isurathesthah sabheyo gurasya, ya-
amanasya Viro Janatam Vikame nah
Parjanya varsatu Phalahutyo na
osadhaya pachyantam Yagoksema
nah Kalpatam*

This is a prayer from the Sukla-
Yajurveda regarding a state. The
sages of the Yajurveda prayed for an
ideal state where everyone should
be true to his profession and where
everyone should live up to the expec-
tation demanded by Society. This
prayer seems fitting to the present
day.

It is obvious that even in those
days more than three thousand
years ago there were people not
sincere enough about their vocations
and there were others who craved
and prayed for sincerity.

It seems that the essential nature
of human character has not changed
much even after three thousand
years.

In those days when the Aryan
poets were creating inspiring poetry
in eulogies to the beauties and
powers of different aspects of nature,
there were people who fell back from
ideals and there were others who
prayed for their salvation. There
were surely many evils in Society
and there were endeavours to dispel
those evils and prayers for the ideal
state to come. So they prayed,

- "(O Brahman
Let Brahmins be learned in our
State
And Kshatriyas be courageous and
victorious in war,

- Let our cows be milch cows,
And the bulls be fit to carry
heavy load
And the horses be swift footed.
Let the anointed have sons
Heroic as well as good-mannered
Let our women be full of good
qualities
Let the clouds pour water
(as required),
And the plants become full of
fruits
Let us acquire what we have not
been able to acquire yet
And let us be able to preserve and
maintain what we have ob-
tained

Our prayer of the present day also
would be something like that,

- "O God
In our state,
Let those who have the fame of
learning become really learned
Let the soldiers be courageous and
strategic
Let the women become qualified
in every respect
Let the Scientists become truthful
And the poets become emotional,
aesthetic and non-mercantile,
Let the politicians become wise
and kind
And the Industries become honest,
Let all of us become true to our-
selves and to our work."

BOROLINE

FESTIVE DAYS OF DURGA PUJA

A horse's lick can cure a cut So they say. But you
can't keep a horse in your medicine chest Boroline is more
reliable, more antiseptic, much easier to keep and use.

Boroline soothes and protects the skin from cuts
and dry or chapped skin
It makes the cure a cinch



BOROLINE HOUSE, CALCUTTA-3.

From Thoreau to Gandhi

BHABANI BHATTACHARYA

“THOREAU furnished me through his essay on Civil Disobedience scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa.” This thought repeats itself in many of Gandhi’s writings. Yet it would be historically inaccurate to say that the idea of the Civil Disobedience struggle he launched in South Africa stemmed out of his perusal of Henry David Thoreau. The movement was already under way and, led by Gandhi, hundreds of Indians were offering Satyagraha and courting imprisonment. In Volksrust prison Gandhi happened to read Thoreau’s essay on Civil Disobedience and it went deep into his heart strengthening his own conviction. It would be worthwhile at this point to give a glance to Thoreau himself as a writer.

Born in 1817, he graduated from Harvard at the age of twenty and soon after became intimately associated with the great writer Ralph Waldo Emerson. This has been called one of the most interesting friendships of literary history. Emerson fourteen years older than Thoreau was already at the height of his power and wielded great influence in the literary world. Age made no barrier. Thoreau stayed in Emerson’s house for two years writing essays and poem. Then the urge for solitude seized him and with his own hands he built a small cottage on the shore of Walden Pond, a crystal clear lake deep in the woods. He lived there in near isolation with his wants reduced to the minimum. “I had three chairs in my house one for solitude two for friendship, three for society. He grew his own food, (the

sult, apart from the produce, was an attractive essay entitled ‘The Bean Field’), and submerged himself completely in nature, which became the most potent stimulant of his creative energy. His literary productivity was now in full swing. He wrote *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* and the first draft of *Walden, or Life in the Woods*. The Walden experiment at self seeking in solitude and leisurely contemplation stretched over a period of two years and two months. Then he returned to the Emerson home. “I am a sojourner in civilized life again.” *The Week* came out in 1849, and the same year saw the publication of his famous essay, *Civil Disobedience*. The genesis of this essay lay in a night that Thoreau had to spend in prison. He had refused to pay tax in support of what he regarded as an unjust State and Church. Arrested and sent to jail he made creative use of the experience even though it lasted for a single night.

A year or two later he was drawn further into his fight against the ‘tyrannical’ State. To start with he had raised his voice in sharp protest against the wide and fast growing gulf between the rich and the poor, the demands for social conformity and subservience to the Church and the State. From this challenge it was only a step to active struggle against Negro slavery, the target of his uttermost hatred. He wrote vehemently and gave lectures ‘giving his attack not upon hatred for the South, but upon fundamental ethical principles.’ He went on writing and drew closer and closer to nature until in 1862 he died of tuberculosis at the age of forty five.

It was only after his death that would recognition of his writings came. A recent edition of his complete works has been issued in twenty volumes. His most perceptive biographer is Henry Siedel Canby. One of the earliest was Henry S. Salt. Thoreau is said to have been ‘made’ by two books, Emerson’s *Nature*, and the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Emerson himself was under the spell of Hindu scriptures, and it was possibly in his library that Thoreau continued a study that he had started as a student at Harvard. He read the Vedas the Upanishads, the Laws of Manu and above all the *Bhagavad Gita*, which as Henry Siedel Canby says, “went deep down into his consciousness and gave him a new birth.” Emerson and Thoreau read the *Gita* in English translation by Charles Wilkins issued in 1785, with a preface by Warren Hastings. Thoreau was strongly impressed by the Second Discourse which commended desireless action. He used many quotations from the *Gita* in his writings, and there are famous passages in *Walden* which owe their inspiration to that work.

“He carried with him always the deep spiritual warmth of the East,” writes Canby. And long after his death the power of his thought touched the minds, among others of Leo Tolstoy and M. K. Gandhi.

His direct conflict with the State was venational even though its duration was all too short. His main objection was to a poll tax imposed in part for the Mexican War which was to extend Negro slavery into the South west. “When a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign

power, it is vain to make wars, but it is like taking medicine against the plague. It will be better to root out the cause of the disease, than to quarrel with and chase the multitude with useless and costly wars.”

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army, and subjected to military law, I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize." There were many other Abolitionists who had likewise become passive resistors, but it so happened that Thoreau, who had not paid the poll tax for six years, was chosen by the authorities to be punished for the default. He was arrested and taken to prison. Next morning he was released—one of his aunts had come rushing to the jailor and paid up the tax on his behalf.

A trivial incident by itself it was a memorable event for the literary world. For Thoreau, back in *Walden*, set down his thoughts on the basic principles that had led him to prison. "Civil Disobedience" did not make any notable impression when it was first delivered as a lecture in 1848 appearing in print the following year. But *Walden*, published in 1854 made a tremendous impact. It stands even today as one of the world's great assets in autobiographical literature. And, significantly, it incorporated a good part of *Civil Disobedience*.

The backdrop of *Walden* is composed of the vast material prosperity, the terrific economic boom, that came upon America in the forties and fifties of the last century. It has been well described as a "fabulous age" changing the moral mind of America. "Materialism spread, but what spread even faster was an intoxication of gain, a rapid expansion of the instincts for power, possession, sensual enjoyments. Against all of this Thoreau rebelled." The keynote of *Walden* is simplicity in life. The intoxication of material progress could not be the final answer. You could have more money, better cities, splendid houses, every amenity of life. But what next?

Canby, in his biography points out that, though *Walden* gained admirers everywhere, became a textbook of the British Labour Party, and found its place as a

world classic of literature, its full significance has not been felt until today, when it claims to be "one of the great modern books." The industrial revolution has run its full circle; the machine is triumphant and the regimentation of society has made everything standardized, the old moral values and ideals of conduct have become powerless. Under such conditions "Walden, with its doctrine of 'simplify, simplify', is no longer blasphemy, except to the school of economists who think that all the world's ills can be cured by production."

The points of contact between the minds of Thoreau and Gandhi are numerous indeed, despite the great difference in their inner make up, their personality, their attitudes.

Thoreau wrote "Most of the luxuries and many of the so called comforts of life are not only not indispensable but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind." And again "None can be an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage points of what we should call voluntary poverty." Gandhi translated this theory into practice and accepted voluntary poverty for himself even in his youth even in South Africa where he had built up a big legal practice. Later, when he could have had vast riches, he became in Churchill's language, "the half-naked fakir." And he was stern in his demand on his co-workers to shun "the so-called comforts of life (Thoreau's words) and live in the utmost simplicity. In his writings over the decades there are scores of passages which carry echoes of what Thoreau stated.

One of his articles in *Young India* is titled "Voluntary Poverty." Commenting on the Western way of life he wrote "The Europeans will have to remodel their outlook if they are not to perish under the weight of the comforts to which they are becoming slaves."

One particular idea of Thoreau left the deepest impression on him. It was the concept of Civil Disobedience.

The editor of *The Portable Thoreau*, prefacing with a note "this, the most electric of Thoreau's essays", refers to the "non-rigour of Thoreau's Philosophic Anarchy" and adds, "Gandhi struggling in South Africa knew it to be just what he wanted." He borrowed the title for the movement he had started, but changed the phrase later to Civil Resistance.

Thoreau's essay begins with the statement "That government is best which governs the least." Gandhi commented on that many years later "In the ideal State, there is no political power because there is no State.

Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that Government is best which governs the least. And again "I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear, because it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress. The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul but the State is a soulless machine. It can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence."

Though elected by the people whose will it should carry out the standing government could act perversely before the people made their demands prevail. In support of this idea Thoreau mentioned the current Mexican War which did not have popular support. Most men — men of straw — served the State simply as machines with their own moral sense and judgment suspended, and they were looked upon as good citizens. A handful of men, real men, served the state not with their heads alone but with their conscience, and they had, therefore to resist the State and be treated by it as enemies.

The people had the right of

FROM THOREAU TO GANDHI

revolution that is, "the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist the government when its tyranny and inefficiency are great and unendurable" — Thoreau wrote (compare Gandhi's words 'Civil Disobedience is the inherent right of a citizen') In fact the invasion of Mexico to perpetuate Negro slavery was the reason which had made Thoreau rebellious against the State. The misfortune was that there were thousands who were opposed to Negro Slavery and yet they did nothing to put an end to it. "It is not so important that many should be as good as you" is that there should be some absolute goodness somewhere for that will lighten the whole lump. Noting Thoreau declared was not the instrument that could always be effective.

A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority.

What about the unjust laws that existed? It was believed that they should be obeyed while the legislators were being persuaded to amend them. Or else the remedy would be worse than the evil. Thoreau poured scorn on the idea. The blame lay entirely with the government he said. "Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it always crucify Christ and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?"

He called on everyone who was an Abolitionist to withdraw support from the government without waiting till they could gain a majority in the Legislature. The common man put an emblem of the government in the person of the tax collector. Refusal to pay tax and being locked up in jail would be a decisive step towards the abolition of slavery in America. Under a government which imprisons and unjustly the true place for a just man is a prison. (It is) the only house in a slave State

in which a free man can abide with honour.

Thoreau went on to ask men not to pay their tax bills then there would be a peaceable revolution. He dwelt on his prison experience. As I stood considering the walls of solid stone two or three feet thick and the non grating which strained the light I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were flesh and blood and bones to be locked up. And he went on.

"As they could not reach me they had resolved to punish my body. I saw that the State was half-witted that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons and that it did not know its friends from its foes and I lost all my remaining respect for it and pitied it."

Gandhi read Thoreau borrowing from the prison library the book which contained the essay on Civil Disobedience. Later he wrote in Indian Opinion (a periodical he edited in South Africa) about his experiences in jail. "The real road to happiness," he said, "lies in going to jail and undergoing sufferings and privations there in the interest of one's country and religion. And he ended his article with a quotation from Thoreau.

"I saw that if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not feel for a moment confined and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar."

There was a Thoreau imprint on much that Gandhi did. Is there was an Indian imprint on Thoreau? writes Louis Fischer. Thoreau in *Massachusetts* borrowed from Gandhi's India and repaid the debt with words that reached Gandhi in a South African cell.

But then while the crucial question in the minds of both was the technique of resistance to be adopted against a tyrannical

State which commanded great force there was a vast divergence in the problems they faced and the circumstances in which these were set. Their approach therefore had to be entirely dissimilar. Thoreau's sole concern was the individual. The individual in conflict with the State would offer civil disobedience for his inner satisfaction. But Gandhi was wholly concerned with the arousal of mass revolt. Thoreau's rebellion was a one man affair against the American State which was far from powerful yet and a great Civil War for the abolition of Negro slavery was close ahead. (The picture of what was to come so soon was nowhere within his sight.)

Gandhi almost a half-century later organised the resistance of hundreds of his countrymen in an alien State which was ready to go to any extent in the application of brute force. The common denominator between the two men was the idea of defeating the weakness in one's own self while keeping away from the path that led to violence. The other link was belief in the adversary's change of heart. And curiously decades later a moment was to come when Gandhi replaced mass resistance by the civil disobedience of individuals, one person at a time even if such action seemed to most of his colleagues nothing more significant than an exercise in futility. It is of supreme significance that on the eve of his great Non-cooperation Movement in India the first Satyagraha leader he issued was simply a reprint of Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience. Twenty-one such leaflets were issued in print from time to time these were apart from the unregistered newspaper *Satyagrahi* which Gandhi issued in defiance of the Indian Press Act the first number was dated April 7, 1919.

To sum up Thoreau was a thinker with nothing in him of

FROM THOREAU TO GANDHI

the organiser the man of action Gandhi was both, in equal measure. Thoreau, a true pioneer, stands at the first milestone of what was to be known later to the world as Satyagraha, and death took him away only a few years before his cherished dream of Negro emancipation became a reality. Gandhi

translated an idea into technique developed it step by step over a period of forty years, and having won complete command over millions of hearts he pitched united 'Soul Force' against relentless brute force and finally by one of the most astounding feats recorded in world history, he drew conquest from

what I looked perilously as the cavernous jaws of defeat. It may be said that where Thoreau's bridge building stopped, Gandhi's began. And the Mahatma, walking the bridge to its end stepped off on solid earth and still walked on — he walked on and on toward the remote horizon.



Artist at work to meet great demand for the miniature statues of the Mahatma at Krishnagar West Bengal. Photo SUNIL DUTT



The British Broadcasting Corporation recording a performance by Geeta Roy, the Indian singer, at St Pancras Town Hall, London

HERMINE de VIVENOT

INDIAN music is well on the way to becoming firmly established among Britain's younger generation of music lovers.

Recitals by leading Indian musicians, Indian films, and talks on the British Broadcasting Corporation's radio and television programmes have contributed towards the trend which has created demand for Indian record. Consequently, recording of Indian music today are on sale in all but the most rural districts.

Cosmopolitan London, of course, is no stranger to Indian music. Accomplished sitar players like Debabrata Chaudhuri have given

recitals at the Commonwealth Institute. They have also played in such cultural centres as Leicester and Brighton, university towns with strong music traditions. Ravi Shankar, of course, is well known through his recital, broadcasts and records, and many this was the introduction to an uninitiated crowd of melody and rhythm.

More Discs Cut

The demand created in Britain for this new kind of music was soon met by the companies cutting music discs. Shops which at first hesitantly stocked a few samples of Indian music found themselves not only selling all their

had but re-ordering and adding to their titles as clients came in with new requests.

In the record catalogues now there are imposing collections of available titles—a proof that Indian music has become part of the cultural scene.

Many who first listened to be in the way of things found that they were caught up in the compelling combination of sitar player and drummer working together.

Sheer Delight

It was so new the first announcing a simple little melody the drummer an equally simple rhythm

INDIAN MUSIC, THE NEW SOUND IN BRITAIN

and then the sheer delight as they begin working on it varying the rhythm and its structure in every possible way.

To Western ears it was novel, almost incomprehensible, but there was excitement in discovering how beautiful and moving it was.

People found it was perfectly possible to appreciate Mozart's flute concerto and Bismillah Khan playing an *alup* on the shehnai of which he is an acknowledged master. Much of this appreciation is undoubtedly due to the interest in Indian music shown by such internationally known figures as Yehudi Menuhin who sponsored a record with the general title, 'Intro-

duction to Classical Indian Music.

This record, though an expensive LP, proved popular. Its special appeal was due to the fact that while the main introduction was spoken by Menuhin, the songs—*Janu Mamaya Vata Nandi Diwakara* and *Sahli Prana*—were illustrated and explained in clear and detailed terms.

Another popular recording is the Music from India series. Record Number 9 in the series is especially in demand and consists of music by Bismillah Khan and party.

Music from Films

Less austere and therefore perhaps particularly popular with teenage listeners are records of music from Indian films

and there is a constant demand for the music of Ishaara, Juari and Do Badan.

Thus it will be seen that in Britain the interest in Indian music is real and on the increase. One dealer with an extensive stock of Indian records said 'Young people today are very adventurous. It is possible that at first listening to Indian music was a fashionable novelty. But this phase did not last for long. Today merchants are knowledgeable and appreciative and buy recorded Indian music because they enjoy it. Since twelve-tone music has been accepted there is no reason why the West should not enjoy Indian music which belongs to one of the oldest musical cultures in the world.'



Arjunati Indrani and her troupe of musicians are seen here during a recording session of music at BBC studios in London.



MRITYUNJAY Banerjee, B.A., B.L., to read the nameplate

It had been there ever since the family moved into the small house that stood at the end of the lane. No one not even the inmates of the house took any notice of the metal plate, except the old man whose name it bore and whose profession it announced to the world.

Dusk was falling like a dead leaf gently, hesitantly when Mrityunjay Bahu returned home. He paused at the gate to take a look at the nameplate as if to make sure that it was there. He read his name a little aloud in the light of the street lamp. With his weather-beaten fingers he pushed the block of metal to the right bringing a view of the IN sign. He had been doing so for many years, day after day with a religious fervour, every time he returned home. "These things matter," he told himself, as if he had to explain his action before entering what he always referred to as his office room.

It was an ill-lit room with a small table, two chairs, a bench and a cupboard which was seldom if at all opened. He deposited the sheet of paper held together with a length of black cord which resembled a worn-out shoe-lace slipped out of his shoes and sat down and spread his hands on the table.

"Father is home," said a husky male voice from somewhere in the house.

"Dadu, why are you so late?" asked Bulbul entering the room with a cup of tea and some sandesh.

"I was in the B. O. Library studying some old records," replied the old man reaching for the tea. "I have to prepare for the new case that has come up. He ate a piece of sandesh and leaned back in his chair, heaving a sigh which seemed to have its origin at the turn of the century. "A lawyer's job is no fun my dear. It's hard work."

"Dadu, the girl reported, as grandchildren do to grandparents, 'Father say you are an incorrigible old man.' She stood there, a thin smile on her well-

formed lips, pulling her sari tightly over her breasts.

"I know this is what you parents tell and you teachers teach at the college. He was irritated. He was not going to tolerate this sort of nonsense in his own house. He was still the head of the family.

Never mind, Bulbul, he said a little tenderly, a little child-like.

"I am a sinner. I like work. I have my work to do and shall go on till I am called away by the Master."

"No, Dadu, Biba didn't mean it badly."

"No one means anything badly these days, my dove, not even that son of mine. Incorrigible old man. That's the swimming up, I suppose. Incorrigible old man. Idiot. Go and tell him that is what he is."

"Oh Dadu you are angry. Is your son angry? I won't come near you any more," said Bulbul.

"No my little goddess. I know you love me and don't think I am an incorrigible old man," he said apologetically. "Now go and fill this pen with some good ink. I have been telling your father to get a bottle

of ink for me, a fortnight
has passed and he is still getting it. Pijush is my first son, but I tell you Bulbul, he can never remember a thing. If you like go and ask him if I am dead or alive he will say he would check up and let you know. Absent-minded idiot.

Bulbul returned with ink in the pen. 'Baba said he has bought a bottle of ink for you but forgot it in the office. He will bring it tomorrow.' She smiled, stroked his hands gently and pleaded. 'Dadu, you look very tired, why don't you go and lie down for a while.'

'Silly girl, tired? Not me! I know these days you're like you wake up tired. You return from college, you must rest a while. Someone came to the house, you are completely exhausted. He seemed a little relieved now and said, "Bulbul, now go light the lamp and blow the conch-shell and say a prayer for two for your old grandfather. I have an important case tomorrow. I am to cross-examine the principal witness."

What case, Dadu?

'Now you have started.' He exclaimed. He was helpless. 'What do you know about law? All that you learn is to go out with his friends and create pandemonium in examination halls. Now go and do what you were told.'

Bulbul didn't mind it. She smiled and trotted out of the room humming the tune of a radio commercial about a brand of toothpaste.

'My God, what's the world coming to! Instead of Thy praise they sing the praise of toothpastes.' The old man moaned, and

couldn't the school in papers
It was hard on him. A man couldn't stay idle. He belonged to an age that respected and loved work, and above all, knew the value of money. He would live next winter but even now he walked most of the time and if the distance was too long, he took a train or a bus. Taxes never not for him. He always travelled class III if he had to pay for the journey. He was fond of telling his children, 'First class people always travel third class, it's the third class people who travel first class.'

A man, once he stops earning, should live no longer. Mityunjay Babu didn't believe in being looked after by and dependent on his sons. 'Branches grow on trees, not trees on branches,' he would say. He didn't earn much but he brought home occasionally five or ten rupees which according to him paid for his keep but according to Pijush Buncjee went towards his tramfare and pan if at all. But no one, not even Pijush Babu, ever said anything before the old man. They kept up the myth that he was still the Dacca lawyer with a flourishing practice. And old Mityunjay Babu at times believed it was so. 'Your Honour,' he said aloud facing the blank wall in front of him. 'Your Honour.' He stopped short. 'My Lord,' he thought. 'I have no one to plead for. God! Take me away before it is late, let me die with honour.'

Baba, it's time for dinner. It was the husky voice of Pijush. Pijush Babu seldom entered the room in deference to his father's

rather, he found the old
man fast asleep, his silvery head resting on the table. 'A lost case!'

'BULBULI' called Mityunjay Babu. There was no answer. She had already left for college. He called 'Koka,' once, twice, thrice and gave up. It was a holiday for him and the boy had already gone out to play cricket with his friends. 'Who's there?' I am going to the court. Madhavi, Pijush's wife, appeared through the side door.

'What's it, Baha?' She pulled her printed sari over her head and waited for Mityunjay Babu to say his line. 'I have some important work to do. I will be late. Santosh Sengupta was to see me this morning but not to worry. If he calls, ask him to come in the evening. He paused, wiped the sweat off his wrinkled brow with a handkerchief, carefully picked up the bundle of papers and held it under his arm.

All right, Baha,' said the daughter-in-law and withdrew. This was a ritual. They had been hearing about this Santosh Sengupta for God alone knew how long. No one had set eyes on him, most likely not even Mityunjay Babu. But he believed such a person existed. His logic was simple. There could be no lawyer worth his name if he did not practise and to practise one must have clients.

He stopped at his favourite pan shop. 'Be quick, I have an important case to attend to. I can't be late.' The panwalla got busy and soon the lawyer was on his way. He vaguely remembered the days when

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he was really busy. It was maddening, exciting and meaningful. People waited long hours in his office to meet him and discuss their problems with him. Many said that if Mrityunjay Babu had been engaged, the case was sure to win. But that was in another age in another city. He was now like a tree that had been uprooted by a storm and left to wither away.

He walked on and on. He had his miles to cover before his time came to an end. A group was watching two ill-fed, famished monkeys performing on the pavement to the beat of a hand-drum. He stood there for a while, chewing the pan, clinging on to the bundle of papers. Suddenly, he felt sad and lost. 'I am like these performing monkeys, jumping the loops.'

Time hung heavily on him. He wished he had the courage to call the bluff and stay at home. But what would people say? He wasn't going to be accused of sponging on his children for a livelihood.

He thought of his friend, the retired professor Sourin Mukherjee. He lived a few streets away with his old wife. But Sourin Babu was a lucky man. He had his pension and was not dependent on his children. He knocked on the door of the ground floor flat and waited. The retired professor, short, crooked, bespectacled, opened the door and welcomed him. "Ah! what a surprise! Mrityunjay Babu, at this hour of the day. Come, come," and then he called out to his wife, "See who is here. Our old friend and. Bring some sandesh."

"I am on my way to the

court. Then I remembered I haven't seen you for a long time. One feels at home in the company of one's kind. Remember, Dacca."

Calcutta was not the place for them to spend their last days. Dacca was Dacca, God's own favourite spot on earth. The holiest, the temple of Dharm, the kindly people one lived among, and the place one really belonged

her as in the old days, but tell you Mrityunjay Babu, we are the happiest, most understanding couple in the world. I am sorry for you.

He didn't want anybody to be sorry for him. If Kalyani Banerjee were alive, he would have been a happier man. In fact, with her passing away fifteen years ago, a part of him had died. He no longer wished to live. He had his



'What case, Dada?'

to. Not like the city, where Mrityunjay Babu was just another spent lawyer, where none had heard of professor Sourin Mukherjee, the eminent physicist. No, this was an impossible world.

"So how are things, Sourin Babu?" asked the lawyer. One lives somehow, and waits for one's day of judgment. I wish my son had not joined government service. If he had taken up a job in a mercantile firm, he would have done well and I would have been happier. We are left alone. But of course I am a lucky man. If Suruchi weren't with me, I would have gone mad. I still fight with

children and grandchildren, they were kind and nice and affectionate towards him. In fact, he had been obstinate all along. God had made him that way.

I can't complain really. But old age has its problems. I can't idle away my time. My children don't like much less appreciate, in working at this age. But I can't change. My father used to say that of all his eight children I was the most difficult, the most obstinate. What to do?"

"I read some books, go for short walks when I feel up to it and in the evening practise a little homeopathy," said the professor.

"I know everybody is

practising homeopathy these days. In my street there are ten of them, that is nearly two per cent of the population. Don't think otherwise. Sourin Babu. I was merely talking."

"I am doing it to keep myself busy, not for money. And I find it most fascinating. I have studied books and consulted people who know. In any case I don't treat major ailments. But that he are you still taking interest in Constitutional Law?"

"The less said about it the better," said the middle-aged man in the old lawyer's office. With all the amendments that have been introduced, there's precious little left of the Constitution. What we have instead is some amendments. They called Sourin Babu, being his denture and mentioning Babu's little child.

"I have a little problem though. I thought of coming to you," said the professor. "You see, Santosh has asked me to buy a plot of land. Of course there's no money to build a house now. And I am told there is a good three khattas available beyond the railway station. I have asked for the title deeds and all that."

"Of course, of course. One must be careful in buying land these days. You don't know what complications there can be. As soon as you get the papers, see me. I return from court every day at 5 o'clock or so."

The professor was not too sure that he did the right thing in mentioning this to the lawyer. After all what advice could a gentle old man give?

That day when he return-

ed home, he told Bulbul, his favourite granddaughter, "Listen, my cuckoo, my little goddess, have you heard of professor Sourin Mukherjee?"

"No, Dadu."

"A genius, I tell you. A genius. He was the physics professor. Now



The route

joined a court. He lives in Satyapana Lane. He will come here any day regarding some property affair that is. So receive him well, if I am not at home."

"Ha, Dadu."

He felt better that day. "I only hope," he told himself, "that that old

miser is not engaging me to save lawyer's fees!"

KOKAN, his grandson, came and sat by the old man on the bench in Mityunja. Babu's office room. "Dadu," why are you not talking?"

"What do you want me to talk about, Koka?" asked the grandfather. His mind was wandering in many directions, all at once. A feeling of uncertainty had settled in him. He yawned gently and held the boy close to him. "What is it, looks like your father has scolded you for something."

"No," said Koka. "It's not that, Dadu. I want to go to see a film, Mother won't give me any money."

"What picture?"

"Oh, Dadu, you won't like it. I want to go to a Hindi film. Dadu, it's called 'Love in Nepal'. Everybody says it's a good book. Dadu, there's a lot of dance and song—twists and shakes. Dadu, it will be wonderful."

"I have seen the posters. That young woman standing in a beach with almost nothing on her and a young man, some Kumaon or the other, holding her by the... Oh, never mind. If you have nothing to do, Koka, why don't you read some good books—Bani in Babu's or Sarat Chandra's."

But whoever reads them, I must be mad to talk to you about these things."

"Dadu, you don't want me to see 'Love in Nepal'? All my friends have seen it. I am the only one. And Mother won't let me see it."

She is the only one who has her head on her shoulder.

THE BRIEF

ders in this household of
nine

Dadu you always side with Mother and fight Father said Rohan

Maybe its so I can change at this age. When we were young, we read the Mahabharata and the Ramayana and we grew up with the songs of Rabindranath the novels of Bankim and Sarat Chandra. I still love to read Michael's poems and

What do they mean to
you Nothing

Dadu havni i red
James Bond'

No my little nan
James Bond is the great
of your age I don
belong We were
feeling good it was
We loved our land and our
people and our epic and
pursuance and folk songs and
tradition

Plsh wife jerepd
with a Kofa are v i
the e Whats the
matte what d e ths i
want ? Nothng Baha
re wants to go c d
Hindi film I tll hm ha
Bhadralogs hldn doll
got ce su h hnz

Q Leight
We were hiking
going to the Kali temple
today Koka will
come

No Ma I will go to
Montu's house His
has brought a
jeroids from
And Koka
the room

This is a
heads in this house
Hippies and Beatle
and shakes I in
manage said Madhav
and withdrew

'Look here the old man called his daughter-in-law. It's a long time since I heard you sing. This evening, sing some of Atulprasad's songs for me.

You sing them so well - "

I don't sing these days
Baba Children don't like
it And where the time
true but it will take
to me one of these days
Ha Baba

Oh Makali n L inal
Save the world and the
little lawyer

It was a day when
in the fall of 1911
a little girl named
Muriel was born
I knew that it was
when happiness was
born

[illegible]

N B r l ra
 l l ll l Or
 cf n l er ts s r ra
 t e n l fl gh
 l b v

Y k S u
 M kl ee l al l oc
 H a l k l l l e
 l o l l l

A I
 Mulh e A I I
 a wh l e I I
 expe h i e f f o m h n
 No 1 I I at my i ge

“B I T T E R a c c o
M I S E R I A B L E
k i n d l y m
h a t t e n e d

Where are you going
Father has asked me to
go to the bank'

What for
Nothing Dadu

"You don't go to the
Back for nothing, O is
an alibi

What alibi Dadu
am telling you the truth

He has asked me to deposit
the money

Let me see and he
held out his hand

'Don't worry Dadu it's
nothing

11-11-41

I will send him a letter
telling him to come to the
house.

I had never before
looked at my father

I was his p... book and his

for the purpose of the account
to be held in the name of

... when he needed
... have to ask

Alfred, 1898

1.1 mod d humi-
cl. l. up. c. 21 must

What a father has
But

Frank: I don't see the need



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THE BRIEF

for it I have my income and that's sufficient for me. But if your father has asked you—

Nothing, Dadu, kichu na. And she ran out with the pass-book and the money.

Mintyung's Baba walked up and down the small room like the Himalayan bear in its cage in the Calcutta zoo. He paced the room for a long time, hardly realising that he was doing so. Then at a sudden, awakened from a dream, he stopped, down the exercise and sat down at his desk, his silver head in his hand. "Even the children know it! There's no doubt that Pipush is a born idiot. Idiot. Idiot. M. son."

When Pipush received from the airport he top-

ed at the gate a little amazed. Something was missing. It took him a little time to realise that the old nameplate of Mintyung's Banerjee had been pulled off. He felt a terror pass through him as it did and had difficulty in reaching the house.

"Madhavi," he called his wife. "Get me some water quickly. I am coming blind." He sat down at the glassful of water and when he had recovered asked Madhavi:

"Where is Father's nameplate?"

"At the time of the day I have never known him to sleep during the day."

"But why?"

"Some one has pulled it down. Nameplate from the

gate. And when I entered the house, I found his office room locked up."

Baba did it himself. And asked me to close the office room and never to open it again."

"But what happened?"

"I don't know."

Pipush rushed to his father's bedroom. Mintyung's Baba was sitting in his bed, his body leaning against a pillow.

Baba

"Not to worry. Pipush, I have given up my practice. It's no crime for a man to retire at eighty and turn his mind to God. And he smiled. And thoughtfully he added: "I had Santosh Sen Gupta call tell him I am not taking my new case."

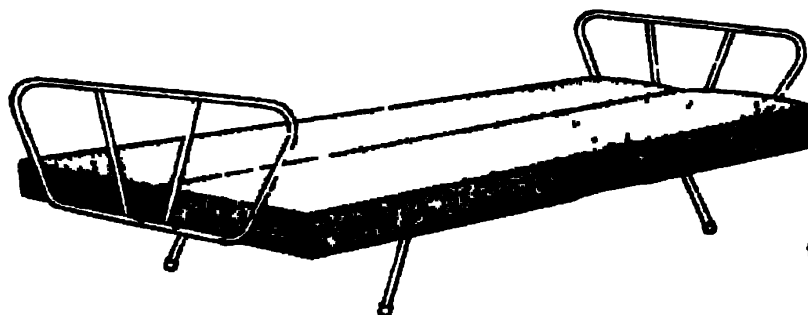
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KATHAK is the most remarkable and notable dance of Northern India and is designated as one of the most important classical dances of India.

The word Kathak comes from the word Kathika or Kathi. From ancient times there was one class of the poets who were called as Kathi Pathak Kathak etc. They used to elucidate the mythological stories from the great epics—the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and by using some movements, postures and expressions in this fashion they tried to explain the subject-matter of those stories to the people. They were singers, readers and dancers too. Illustrations of such kind of people are found in the *Mahabharata* and the *Brahma Purana*.

One of the main characteristics of the Indian social system was that the living of a certain family or a class depended on a particular

of work, whereof the skillness of that family or class automatically increased. Usually this practice of hereditary system was followed, where we find that a certain class propagated dance, song and drama from generation to generation.

Some are of the opinion that prior to the Muslim period this art was not in

BANDANA SEN

vogue. In other words there was no existence of any real dance or song in the Kathak type of dance. But this idea is totally wrong and misleading. In the Vaishnava religion we find the culture of dance, song, poetry, literature of Radha and Krishna as the main cults in the Vaishnava religion wherein Ras-hila or operatic play comes into existence. The

dance in Ras-hila consists mostly of an amplification of the gesture, mime and expression of the Kathak story-tellers. During this period Swami Haridas, Mahuraj, Tansen, Surdas, Gubinda, Swami Nand, Bhanu Bawa and Meerabai were great poets and poets.

In ancient times the introduction of Kathak dance was found in Dhruv, Dhruva and Kirtan. This dance was called a Dev Nrit or Temple Dance as it was presented before the god and goddesses. But with the advent of the Muslim rulers this art was transferred into the courts of the kings and emperors for the purpose of their own entertainment.

The effect was that professional dancer appeared in place of the temple dancer. This class of dancer was influenced by the Hindu and Muslim cultures. Its result was that we find the practice of explaining Radha Krishna's

KATHAK DANCE

game of life and the 'abhinaya' existing in the courts of Muslim emperors. Further the practice of presenting different Muslim 'gats' and 'salam tukras' is found in the court of Hindu kings. But it must be noted that during the Muslim period Kathak came to be characterised as graceful, expressive and sensuous.

Emperor Akbar patronised this art to a great extent and from his time this dance was called as a court dance. With the passing of time and with the change of social, economical and political environment the spirit of this sacred Kathak dance gradually changed and the purity and sanctity of this dance was eventually lost and it turned to be an object to please the minds of the people in place of God.

During the British regime the English rulers and high officers derived great pleasure from this dance. So with the change

of time the spirit of this dance began to change colours.

In the 19th century Wazid Ali Shah the Nawab of Oudh patronised this art to a great extent. From his time we find the real improvement and propagation of Kathak dance.

There are two distinct schools of Kathak viz., Lucknow and Jaipur. Some are of opinion that there is another school also which is called as Benares school or gharana. In the Lucknow gharana the influence of Javan is found and the prominence of expressions is much in existence. The influence of this school has created a good impression upon the people due to its 'lal' 'lava' and different 'rasas'.

It has already been mentioned that in the beginning of the 19th century the last Nawab of Oudh patronised the Lucknow school of dance to a great extent. The Nawab himself was a good singer, dancer and a poet as well. His main court dancer was Thakur Prasadji. The Nawab was his disciple and he attained such proficiency in dance that he took the role of Krishna with 'Thakur Prasadji'. It is told that for the improvement and development of this art he spent a great fortune amounting to over half a crore of rupees.

After the death of Thakur Prasadji the other dancers who ornamented the court of the Nawab were Kalka Maharajji and Bindadin Maharajji. The latter was a devotee of Krishna who composed many 'bhavans', 'thumris' and 'purnas'. The Nawab being a good poet also composed various 'ghazal' and 'dadra' songs. With the patronisa-

tion of the Nawab, 'thumri', 'dadra' and 'ghazal' were introduced for the first time in the Kathak dance making it rich and prosperous. From now on a union is found between the tunes and the meaning of the songs on one hand and the rhythm and tempo of the dance on the other and thus the mixture of different movements and expressions gives a new shade to this Kathak dance.

The paternal grandfather of Kalka Prasadji and Bindadinji started living in Lucknow. But their original home was in the Haddia district of Allahabad. Bindadin Maharajji took his lessons of dancing from Thakur Prasadji. He was an expert in foot-work and 'lava'. He had no son. During his time many famous dancers of Lucknow became his disciples.

Kalka Prasadji was the younger brother of Bindadin Maharajji. He was an exponent of dance, tabla and pakhwaj. His three sons, Achhan Maharajji who died several years ago, Lachhu Maharajji and Sambhu Maharajji—these three brothers received their training from their father. Achhan Maharajji was really an expert on 'bhava' and 'tatkai' i.e. foot-work. He composed many 'bhavas' based on different 'rasas'. He spent an easy and simple life that was why he was called as 'Achhan'. He breathed his last in 1944.

Lachhu Maharajji is also an expert in this art. He has received the Sangeet Natak Academy award from the Government of India.

The youngest, Sambhu Maharajji is a dancer, singer and tabla player. He

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KATHAK DANCE

is the greatest living authority on Kathak dance. His bhao and abhinaya are unique. For his abhinaya' he has received the title 'Abhinaya Chakrabarti' from Madras. He has named the Kathak as 'Natwari Nritya'. Shambhu Maharajji has also received the award of 'Padmashri' from the Government of India. He has recently been honoured with a Fellowship of the Sangeet Natak Academy. Sri Rameshwar Misra and Sri Sukrishna Misra are disciples of Shambhu Maharajji who have also contributed much to the Lucknow school of Kathak dance. The late Sukhdev Misra of Benaras had made valuable contributions in this branch of art. Sri Prahlad Das, Sm. Bela Aramb and Sm. Alakanandi have contributed much for the propagation of Lucknow school of Kathak dance in West Bengal.

Achhan Maharajji's son Sri Brijmohan Maharajji is young and is the greatest Kathak dancer of this age. After the death of his father, he got his training from his two uncles. He is the principal legatee of the Lucknow school. An expert also in tabla and song, he is now busy with his research on dancing. It is really surprising to see his different works on 'lava' in his foot-work. Under his direction the ballet dances based on Kathak viz., Kumar Sambhav, Malati Madho, Gobardhan Leela, Fag Leela, Shan-e-Oudh, Dalia etc. have been highly appreciated by the public. His short dance compositions of Kaliya Daman, Madan Rati, Taj Mohal etc. are admirable.

Regarding the second



A Kathak dance pose

Photo: Prabir Dey

one that is the Jaipur gharana or school we find mainly the foot-work is also the combination of tabla and pakhwaj 'bol'. In this school 'wast' or 'bhao' is evident. Speed is one of the main factors of this dance. In the Jaipur school the influence of 'tandi' is found and the prominence of 'lavakari' is more pronounced.

We do not find any genealogical list of the Jaipur school of Kathak dance. In this school the famous dancers were Pandit Hari-

manji, Hari Prasadji, Durga Prasadji, Chuni Lalji, Lalji, Mohan Lalji, Narayan Prasadji etc.

Lalaji was the court dancer of Ramesh and Mahesh states who had good proficiency in tabla and 'pakhwaj'. His daughter, the late Lalumari Devi was the unchallenged dancer during her time.

Pandit Sundar Prasadji is the younger brother of Lalaji. He has learnt this art from his father, brother as also from Bindadin Maharajji. By learning

KATHAK DANCE

both the schools, he has created a bridge between the two schools of Kathak dance. He is also a recipient of Sangeet Natak Academy award.

Though the Jaipur gharana did not receive much patronage from the Nawabs, the Hindu Rajas and Kings viz the Rajas of Jaipur and Madhya Pradesh extended their support to this gharana. Many dancers of Jaipur gharana became the disciples of Lucknow gharana. The Raja of Raigarh (Chakradhar Singh) was a patron of Jaipur and Lucknow schools. Achhan Maharajji, Jailalji, Mohanlalji and Narayan Prasadji were his court dancers. He used to hold music conferences in which many invitees and non-invitees could participate. Kartikji became expert in Kathak dance under his patronage.

There is another school of this dance Benaras Gharana or Janki Prasad Gharana. Many experts hold the view that this school is as old as the other two schools of Kathak dance. Its birth is in Rajasthan but it developed in Benaras and for that reason it is called the Benaras school of Kathak dance. The main features

of this dance is that 'bol' and 'kabitā' are used and that 'bols' and 'tabla' and 'pakhwaj' are avoided. Movements of body and foot are used slowly for maintaining the grace and charm of the dance. Some of the noted dancers of this school are Hanuman Prasadji, Sivalaji, Gopaldasji, Nawal Kishoreji, Bansidharji, Omkar Prasadji, Kurlanlalji and Krishna Kumarji.

In the 20th century the contribution of Madam Menaka is very significant. She was attracted to the Lucknow school and was associated with Pandit Ramnarayanji, Sri Damayanti Joshi and Sitaram Mishraji. After attaining proficiency in different classical dances of India she exhibited Kathak dance in many countries of the world.

So we find that in the early stage Kathak dance was demonstrated in the temples in connection with Holi, Vasant Dassera and Diwali festivals. In the mediaeval period the venue changed and it was transferred to the courts of the kings and emperors.

During the British period the allowances granted to the Hindu Kings and Nawabs were reduced. As such they failed to patronise

liberally this art as they used to do previously. As a result many artists had to suffer.

Now the Government of India has laid special stress on the cultivation of this branch of art. It has also sponsored scholarship for the young and talented students of Kathak Kendra, established by the Government.

Kathak dance has lost much of its old tradition. The original devotional aspect of this art is much lost. We find a blend of different cultures which have moulded the present shape of this particular type of dance.

Pandit Sambhu Maharaj has composed the Kathak dance on the basis of Vaishnava religion. He says,

Kathan Kare To Kathak Kaha. It means he who narrates is called a narrator. Lord Krishna is the main hero of this dance. His one name is Nataraj. For explaining the good qualities of Nataraj in the dance he calls this dance as Nataraj Nritya. So instead of introducing the Selami 'Iltia' he introduces Rangmanch Ki Tukra which means that instead of asking blessings from the Nawabs and emperors the 'Dharitri' that is the mother earth should be invoked first because the artist must remember that when he first puts the feet on the stage that stage is as Mother Dharitri herself and that Mother should be worshipped first before the actual start of dance.

Change of time is bound to bring more innovations into this art, but in any case the old tradition of Kathak should not be sacrificed for the craze of novelties.

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Land Tenure System Of Bengal — A Survey

AMAR SAHA

EXTRME leftists may differ but the trend of modern land legislation pre-eminentlly aims at liquidating feudalism from Bengal. Though feudalism still exists in the non agricultural sector of entire West Bengal and in both the agricultural and the non agricultural sectors in Calcutta as defined in Municipal Act 1951, in foreseeable future one can hope that this system will be eradicated in entirety with the change of times. In this perspective the importance of the study of the background of our land tenure system cannot possibly be ignored.

It is the decided opinion of all the historians including Moreland that the intermediaries between the monarch and the agriculturists were done away with in Akbar's regime. The system introduced by him through Todarmall his minister was popularly called *Zabt* system under which revenues were directly collected from the tenants. The credit of the implementation of the project indeed goes to Todarmall but it is really Sher Shah who innovated this project. Thus Fipkin stone in his *History of India* 5th Edn. P. 542 writes that the fiscal system inaugurated in the regime of Akbar was only a continuation of the plan commenced by Sher Shah.

So far as Bengal is concerned this *Zabt* system could not work well for a variety of reasons one being presumably the distance of the province from the seat of the Emperor. As we

find from *Amir Akbari* (Gladwin's Translation) landlordism even in Akbar's time was not eradicated from Bengal. In the Subah of Bengal the Zemindars furnished forces of 2,000 cavalry, 800 infantry, 100 elephants, 4260 cannons and 4400 hoars. Those Zemindars obviously were no other than intermediaries whose function was to realise rents and to remit the same after usual deductions to the monarch.

The system pursued by Murshid Quli Khan in Bengal during his governorship of the province was known as *maljuma* system. Todarmall's system of direct collection of the revenue was not found suitable to the conditions that prevailed in Bengal. Under Todarmall's system Bengal then was divided into thirty four sarkars and each sarkar was divided into a number of parganas or mahals, it being the lowest administrative unit. Murshid Quli divided Bengal into thirteen chaklas and thereby abolished the thirty four sarkars in Todarmall's system. According to Ascoli however (vide *Early Revenue History* by Ascoli) the chakla was in existence in Akbar's time but its development as an administrative unit was the work of Murshid Quli Khan. Each chakla during the regime of Murshid Quli was placed in charge of an *Amil* who was responsible for the collection of revenue of the entire chakla under his charge. The official position and status of the then *Amil* can be compared with that of the present-day Collec-

tors who according to the definition of the term 'collectors' is defined in Section 3(8) Bengal General Clauses Act in districts other than Calcutta are the chief officers in charge of Revenue administration of the districts of which they are the Collectors. *Amils* performed the duties of magistrates as well. Under Murshid Quli *jaradars* or contractors used to make actual collection of revenue and the *Amils* on their part were responsible for the collection of the revenue from the *jaradars* or contractors. In the second and third generations those *jaradars* came to be called as *Zemindars*. On many of them the titles of *Rajas* or *Naharajas* were conferred later. We all know in 1793 Lord Cornwallis by his Permanent Settlement Regulation brought the *Zemindari* system in Bengal. In support of the proposition that this feudalism was not new to the people of Bengal we may quote the following from *History of Bengal* published by Dacca University, Vol. III, P. 400.

The land tenure system taken over by the English was in its main feature the creation of Murshid Quli Khan. Lord Cornwallis only continued the system in a more refined but rigid form."

With the grant of the firman (order) of the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1766 A.D. from Shah Alam the last remarkable action of the great Moghals the East India Company a mercantile concern emerged

LAND TENURE SYSTEM OF BENGAL—A SURVEY

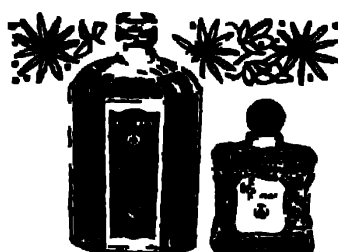
as a decisive political group. Thereby the right of collecting taxes and conducting the civil administration was conferred on the Company by Shah Alim who released the Company from the liability of payment of customs of dewani which was used to be paid to the Court.

With the title of the first part of the book, the author has divided the subject into three parts. The first part deals with the Company's policy in Bengal. The second part deals with the Board of Directors of the Company to constitute a Supreme Council of the English Governor to the Company in the matters concerning primarily the revenue.



K. HORE

Author of 'The History of Bengal'



administration. The Supreme Council did not succeed in improving the chaotic condition resulting from the collusion of the collectors of the revenue with the Zemindars. With a view to improving the condition the Supreme Council appointed Europeans as supervisors instead of natives.

In 1793 AD, ten per cent of the revenue was added to the revenue of the Company. This was done to meet the expenses of the Company. The revenue of the Company was divided into three parts. One part was for the Company, one part was for the Government, and one part was for the Zemindars. The revenue of the Company was divided into three parts. One part was for the Company, one part was for the Government, and one part was for the Zemindars.

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displaced Zemindars were rehabilitated and their position as far as possible made permanent. Eventually came the Permanent Settlement Regulation in 1793 AD through the efforts of Lord Cornwallis. It is interesting to find when the French Revolution wiped off the vestige of feudalism, it was enforced in India by the Britishers who suppressed the rule of the revenue.

The revenue of the Company was divided into three parts. One part was for the Company, one part was for the Government, and one part was for the Zemindars. The revenue of the Company was divided into three parts. One part was for the Company, one part was for the Government, and one part was for the Zemindars.

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LAND TENURE SYSTEM OF BENGAL—A SURVEY

between the landlord on the one hand and the tenant on the other. It may be interesting to note that this Rent Act continued till 1st November, 1965 when Section 59(4) West Bengal Land Reforms Act was enforced. The West Bengal Land Reforms Act however has no operation in the cities within the Calcutta Municipality Act. So this repeal of Rent Act is not operative in Tollygunj Garden Reach etc. So these cities are still governed by the Rent Act according to a school of jurists.

The hostile attitude of the Zemindars compelled the British Government to enact Bengal Tenancy Act, 1886. Under that Act the raiyat was entitled to occupancy right by cultivating some land not necessarily the same land in the village continuously for twelve years. This gave the raiyats some status. The Bengal Tenancy Act had a major amendment in 1938 and there after still another in 1955.

Soon after the passing of the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Act 1958 the Government appointed a Land Revenue Commission presided over by Sir Francis Flood to examine the then land tenure system. The report of the Commission submitted in 1940 disclosed the necessity of abolition of Permanent Settlement Regulation and introduction of a land tenure system by which the tenants of the lowest degree could come directly under the Government. Unfortunately due to the outbreak of War no more action could be taken than the appointment of an expert committee for assessing the implications of the recommendations of the Flood Commission. The committee called the Bengal Administrative Enquiry Committee in 1945 in their report concurred with the views of the Flood Commission that the Permanent Settlement Regulation should be

repealed. The cumulative effect of the report and the urge of the people led to the passing of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act in 1954. It mainly brought about the acquisition of all estates and abolition of all intermediary rent receiving interests. The Act as originally passed did not touch the raiyats and non agricultural tenants and this exclusion was achieved by the definition of the word 'intermediary' in Section 2 of the Act by which an intermediary was estate holder, tenant holder etc. above a raiyat and non agricultural tenant.

Article 19(1)(1) of the Constitution of India guaranteed to all citizens the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property subject to reasonable restriction being imposed on such right under clause (2). Art. 19(1) provides that no person can be deprived of his property except by the authority of the law. Art. 19(1) was added to the Constitution (First Amendment) Act 1951 with a view to validating the abolition of Zemindari and of the Permanent Settlement and to keep the enactments relating to such abolition immune from the attack based on Arts. 14, 19, 31. But the estates or rights in an estate referred to in Art. 19(1) as introduced by the First Amendment could not embrace the rights and interests of raiyat and under raiyats as also of the non agricultural tenants. The fourth Amendment of Art. 31(2) of the Constitution of India put the interests of raiyat and under raiyat at the same footing as proprietors and tenant holders. So on 20th November 1960 Chapter VI of W.B.E.A. Act was substantially amended and it made provision for issue of notification by which the interests of raiyat and under raiyats were deemed to be estates within the meaning of the Article referred to above. The seventeenth Amend-

ment of the Constitution facilitated the matter to a great extent and since that Amendment the rights in relation to an estate have been made comprehensive to include even the interests of raiyats and under raiyats. The next step in legislation is the West Bengal Land Reforms Act which governs the relationship between the tenants, interests and the tenants or raiyats on the one hand and the State on the other. On 1st November 1961 by a notification the Government repealed the Bengal Tenancy Act and thus the feudal system in respect of agricultural lands was abolished in areas outside Calcutta.

Calcutta is still outside the purview of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act. But the Calcutta Municipal Act embraced certain areas from time to time within its operation. As for example Tollygunj a suburb of Calcutta prior to March 1955, had its own municipality. By notification No. 4004 dated August 8 1953 various municipalities including the Tollygunj Municipality were included within the definition of Calcutta. The Bengal Tenancy Act did not apply to Calcutta. But even after the inclusion of Tollygunj within Calcutta the right of landlord to have a tenant under him continued it being a vested right. Since the W.B.E.A. Act does not extend to Calcutta the result is the landlord of those areas enjoys a peculiar immunity and the record of the Calcutta Collector is one of that still in Calcutta there are about 60 estates big or small. Similarly the non agricultural tenants too enjoy a privilege for the definition of intermediary is given in Section 2 of the W.B.E.A. Act excluded such tenants and no provision has affected their position as has been done in case of raiyats and under raiyats.

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MYSORE—THE CITY OF GARDENS

In 1907 the original Palace was destroyed by fire and in June 1900 the Palace was rebuilt for the marriage of the then Maharaja.

The Lalita Mahal Palace presently used as a State guest house for VIPs stands in the eastern part of the city with a beautiful and pleasant terraced garden.

The Mysore city lies by the side of a rocky hill, named after the goddess Chamundi. 1489 feet above the sea-level and only about 10 miles south-west by road from the Mysore city the hill is one of the beauty spots in the city. The Chamundeswari Temple rests on the top of the hill. A flight of nearly one thousand stone steps built by a cloth merchant of Mysore leads to the top of the hill.

The Chamundeswari Temple a fine quadrangular Dravidian temple. The goddess of Chamundi or Durgā Chamunde was spiritually presents herself from one Dusserah to another in this temple. The shrine has been there from time immemorial. Only the massive gopuram was erected by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III after the fall of Tipu Sultan in 1799.

A high mountain, wrote Swartz the German missionary in 1779 with a pagoda on its summit, was formerly dangerous to travellers. The poison inhabitants of that mountain used to rush out upon travellers cut off their noses and offer them to their goddess. But Hyder has most rigorously forbidden it."

Halfway down to the Chamundi hill the huge reclining Bull lies carved out of an enormous mono-

lith. The Bull, artistically executed with rich ornamentation was a gift of King Doddappa Raja who reigned from 1659-1672. Twenty-five feet long and sixteen feet high the Chamundi Bull is adorned with ropes, chains, garlands of bells and jewels of stones and with half-closed eyes the Bull is on a terrace facing south in yogic fashion presumably in meditation. The head of the Bull is at a height of more than 45 feet from the ground level.

The Dusserah a great annual event of the Mysore city held in September-October draws lakhs of people from all over India. The city on the day wears a festive garb in commemoration of the epic event. While the Mysoreans give themselves to feasting and merriment the Maharaja practices austerities during the ten days of Dusserah celebrations. The Maharaja rides on an elephant bedecked with a golden howda followed by bright lights carried by hundreds of people, firework displays and hot balloons.

Nearly 11 miles from Mysore city lie the famous Brindavan Gardens with its water fountains illuminated by hundreds of brightly coloured lights on week-ends and on special occasions. The garden reminds one of the romance of Radha and Krishna of the Dwapa era.

After driving 10 miles from Mysore city one can reach Srirangapatna. It is an island formed by two branches of the river Cauvery. The island-town with a long history is about three miles in length from east to west and one

mile in breadth. The town was founded in 1454 by a descendant of one of the local officers appointed by Ramanuja the Vishnuite apostle who named the island-town as Sri Ranga or the city of Lord Ranganatha or Vishnu.

The Ranganatha Temple of Srirangapatna is one of the largest of the temples in Mysore State. The architecture is of the Dravidian style with a lofty tower or gopuram in front. The image of Ranganatha the majestic figure reclines on *Ani Seshu* or Lord of serpents. About 1574 when Chama Raja Wodeyar IV was performing puja in this temple the then Viceroy attempted to seize him. Warned by the danger the Raja escaped and continued to defy his rival.

In 1742 Hyder Ali died and his son Tipu Sultan succeeded him. He inherited a large dominion of which the island town Srirangapatna was the capital which became the centre of diplomatic manoeuvre against the rising imperial power of the British. In 1792 Tipu was defeated by Lord Cornwallis at Srirangapatna. He strained every nerve to form a coalition by means of which the English could be expelled from India. In 1799 the capital surrendered to the British and the Wodeyar family was reinstated on the throne of Mysore.

On May 3, 1799 Tipu was laid to rest in the mausoleum which was built by Tipu for his father and mother at the eastern end of Srirangapatna towards south. It is a beautiful square structure surrounded by a dome with minarets at the angles and surrounded by a corridor sup-

MYSORE—THE CITY OF GARDENS

ported by pillars of horn-blende

Of all the places in Mysore, the world-famous Jog Falls, where the river Sharavathi falls from a height of about 900 feet, take the pride of the place. The Falls are at a distance of about 70 miles from Shimoga the nearest railway station. They are four in number. That is the Raja, the Rani, the Roarer and the Rocket. With luxuriant vegetation all around it offers a picturesque natural scenery.

Mysore is also a garden of pretty flowers. The historic Lal Bagh in the Bangalore city, is the best of the gardens in Mysore State. The gardens artistically laid out by Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, extending over several hectares, contain a rare and valuable collection of tropical and sub-tropical plants. Besides the lawns and gardens there is a spacious Glass House. In the centre with a crystal glass roof.

The Vidhan Soudha at Bangalore city is one of the most impressive buildings built in post-independence India. A massive and imposing structure in granite overlooking the expansive Cubbon Park, this four-storied ornamental structure built at a cost of 27 crores in the Dravidian style with towering columns, captivating frescoes and carvings is rectangular in shape.

The State of Mysore possesses many beautiful temples such as Badami, Aihole, Pahladkal, Belur and Halebid etc. Badami is famous for its magnificent cave-temples. In Aihole, Bijapur district, once the religious capital of the Chalukyan empire there are



Tipu's Tomb, Srirangapatna

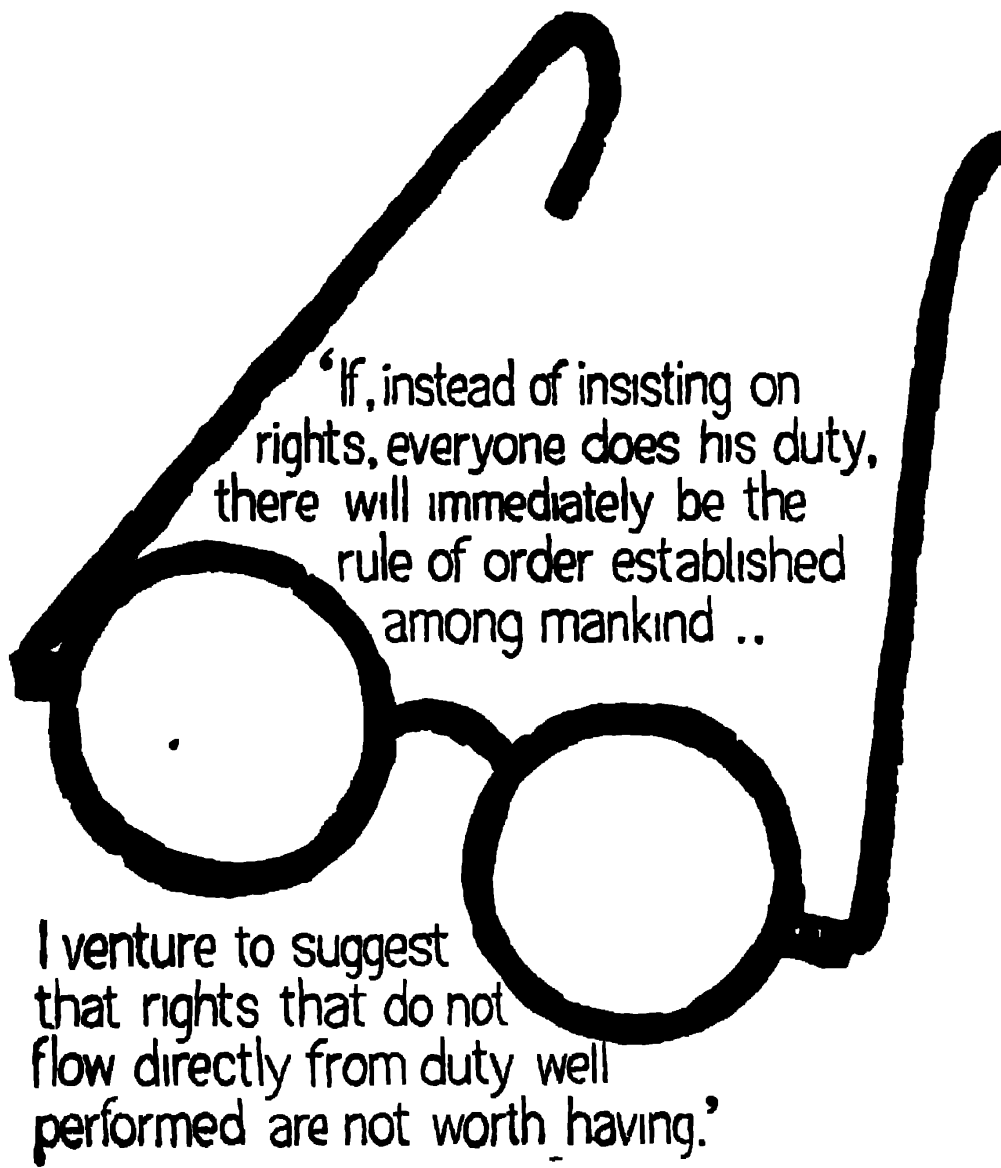
over seventy ancient famous monuments. The most famous one known is the Chaulukyan school of architecture, built between 400-600 A.D.

The Hoysalas under whose patronage most of the temples were constructed began in 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. Somnathpur, 15 miles from Srirangapatna is famous for the Chinnakesava Temple, one of the best existing specimens of Hoysala architecture. The Chinnakesava Temple at Belur, 18 miles from Bangalore city, constructed by the Hoysala King Vishnuvardhana in 117 A.D. is one of the most exquisite specimens of Hoysala architecture. The temple is famous for Black figures. About 10 miles from Belur is Halebid. It was once the most flourishing capital of the Hoysala Kings. Dedicated to Lord

Siva, the Hoysala Temple at Halebid is another masterpiece of Hoysala architecture. Both the temples at Belur and Halebid are the cradle of the Hoysala school of architecture and are world-renowned.

About 25 miles from Hassan by road Sravanabelagola, is famous for its 57-foot monolithic Gomateswara statue. It is on the summit of the hill of Indragiri, 170 feet above from the ground and is the largest standing statue in Asia. This is the symbol of the Chinnakesava Temple.

The loftiest among the mountain ranges in the State of Mysore tableland are the Baba-Budans. The range picturesque and hoary in age, is rich with the flavour of epic, the fragrance of history and more than all, spiritual glory.



'If, instead of insisting on rights, everyone does his duty, there will immediately be the rule of order established among mankind ..

I venture to suggest that rights that do not flow directly from duty well performed are not worth having.'

Mahatma Gandhi.

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KSHIRODE BHATTACHARJEE

CALCUTTA football season of 1969 ended rather peacefully —this was a news by itself after experience of last two years. That an IFA Shield final between the old rivals Mohun Bagan and East Bengal could be successfully concluded came to be an added satisfaction. To crown all a well-deserved double for Mohun Bagan who won both the League and the Shield provided a new inspiration, if not glittering hope for our soccer fans.

The Shield final between these great rivals in 1967 ended in a draw on the first day could not be replayed and the tournament had to be abandoned. An impasse over the introduction of a super-league in Calcutta Football League was a crucial bottleneck for the 1968 season leading to bitterness, controversies, court injunctions, etc. As a result both the League and the Shield tournaments were left unfinished. And the beginning of the 1969 season showed nothing but a gloomy prospect with none

of the problems solved and the same old disputes rising then heads. Even though not with the same velocity.

No wonder, therefore, that in a recent meeting of

the Governing Body Indian Football Association a resolution was brought forward and passed, congratulating the new President Mr Justice N C Talukder and the two joint



IFA Shield East Bengal vs Eastern Railway
Photo: SATYAN SEN

SUCCESSFUL END OF SOCCER SEASON

secretaries on their creditable performance.

The President in his turn returned the compliment to other members of the body but for whose co-operation such a seemingly impossible task could not have been achieved. This might look a field of mutual admiration or just a

diplomatic move, specially because the resolution was pioneered by a mastermind of Calcutta sports whose influence on games administration in India is irresistible, despite an indomitable, indefatigable and almost irreconcilable battle waged by at least one First Division League Club.

However apart from the strains and the principles involved, the I.F.A. President could claim that he had rescued Calcutta football from an apparent debris as all others including the joint secretaries were already there last year. Whether it is still out of the woods whether this is



**"MY MOTHER
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WHEN I WON!"**

says D'p Bose
of Ballygunge Calcutta



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SUCCESSFUL END OF SOCCER SEASON



First Division League Mohun Bagan vs Arjun

Photo RAJENDR SEN

merely the temporary palliative of a decaying disease and whether a hasty conclusion of the season can lead to appreciable improvement of Indian soccer are issues which may be talked *ad infinitum*.

That the super-league plan came through and was worked off for the first time in history proved to be an interesting innovation although the promise of good football did not materialise. That speaking the super-league soccer mostly produced nothing but trash, in fact the preliminary league match between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal fished out much better stuff than their final tussle in the super-league.

As a contrast the Shield matches—of course, in later rounds—were more lively, notwithstanding

their one-sided character, non-15-minute duration of play and a wash out of the visiting teams on rain-soaked and water-logged grounds. Mohun Bagan, opening in the end to a long time earlier rounded off the season with two glorious victories—first over Mahomedan sporting in the semi-final and second against East Bengal in the final. It was not exactly the margin but the way in which the victory was earned that was the principal point to be noted. Obviously East Bengal were not in their elements in the final on their own stick ground and could never develop teamwork. But that was not so with the Mahomedans in the semi-final. For a major part of the first forty-five minutes it is they who shaped better. But, after Mohun

Bagan opened scoring in the 35th minute—a goal much against the run of play—the Mahomedans faced a hurricane—more appropriately a typhoon—in the opposing attack. The full back fumbled and collapsed to find themselves fouled down within ten minutes of the restart after interval. This seven-to-ten minute period of hectic pressure to which they succumbed was undoubtedly the most sensational, though brief display of fast football in the season. Although the Mahomedans relied then co-ordination later the destruction was too big for rehabilitation.

Indeed the terrific speed and better understanding were the chief contributing factors to Mohun Bagan's overall success. Rain was possibly their ally as they utilised the greasy fast-moving ball

SUCCESSFUL END OF SOCCER SEASON^{2,2}



IFA Shield Final Mohun Bagan v. East Bengal
Photo: SA YEN SEE

more advantageously than their opponents whose short-passing method invariably slowed down the pace on such a turf.

The long legged to ward on the extreme left Pranab Ganguli whose overpowering pace, tenacious like India-rubber as he starts moving up, came to be Mohun Bagan's trump card in the season. Had he possessed the correct technique in shooting and if he could utilise his right foot properly he would have been really in a class by himself.

But the most consistent and useful player for

Mohun Bagan was then right full-back Bhishani Roy ideal for the 4-2-4 game and fittingly declared as Footballer of the year by the Veterans Football Club. His constructive work lent a remarkable edge to the forward line.

East Bengal who won their preliminary League match against Mohun Bagan by a last-minute goal and were leaders on the table had to be content with being runners-up in both the League and Shield tournaments. With all their promising talents, their team did not take a

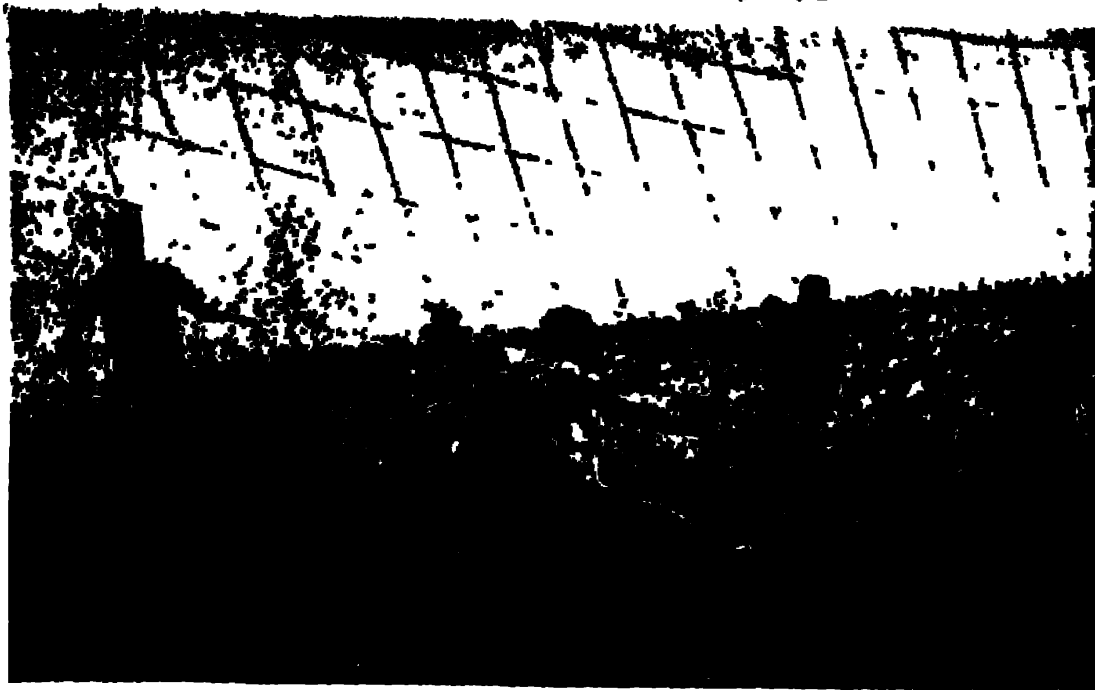
definite shape and their sudden switch from their usual 3-2-5 to 4-2-4 game on a treacherous turf was perhaps too bold an experiment in the Shield final. Full back S. Karmakar nicely came up through the season while S. Bhowmick proved to be an energetic hard-working forward. But, Bhowmick still lacked necessary cleverness and understanding to be effective. Fortunately or unfortunately the entire brains of their attack depended on Parnal Dey who sometimes found the conditions too heavy for him.

Stopper John was an asset to any side for his cool calculated display but once at least in the Shield final he was overshadowed by the vigour and enthusiasm of his counterpart on the other side C. Prasad who made up his lack of finesse with sheer tenacity of purpose.

Deplorably from the football point of view it was again too much of Mohun Bagan East Bengal. The absence of true opposition seems to take the game into stagnant waters. The poor outstation contest—the few prominent visiting teams that came to compete having found their graveyards on wretched grounds—and the failure of local opposition were lamentable features of the season.

Mahomedan Sporting involved in too many unseemly incidents ultimately cried off from the League. Returning to the Shield after winning the Independence Day Cup and Boracolor Trophy in Assam they were certainly looking up. But they sadly lacked finish and their pattern-weaving was sometimes

SUCCESSFUL END OF SOCCER SEASON



IFA Shield Final Mohun Bagan v East Bengal

THEO. MANENDRA CHOUDBURY

too slow to penetrate the opposing defence.

The two Railways were the opponents in the post-rail to rise up to expectations. The B. N. Railway who played an excellent match against Mohun Bagan in the early League season came to be uncertain in their mood and form. The same might be said of Eastern Railway. Eastern's depleted team made a mild sensation by holding East Bengal to a draw in the Shield semi-final. But it was too much for them and they were swamped four-nil in the replay. And this well-known Railway side failed to qualify for the super-league.

The two comparatively new teams that became conspicuous by their entry in the super-league were Bata and Port Commissioners. But none of them were consistent enough to shine in later stages. The Port team, however had the distinction of forcing East Bengal to a draw twice in the League. The point they snatched from

East Bengal in the super-league was vital and paved the way for Mohun Bagan who needed only a single point in their League match with their rivals to be crowned the champions. The excellent performance of Arora's traditional team—who had occupied the fourth place in last year's League table—provided another disappointment.

So the price of hot living the season was not sustained. The incidents in East Division League were possibly reduced after the Sportsing's withdrawal but they poured into the minor matches and tournament. There were more frequent challenges to the referees' decisions and even the final of a Railway inter-divisional competition at Ranchi repata was marred by the hydra-headed rowdiness.

The Government management of the maiden stands and its increasing interest in the game may have some beneficial re-

sults. And it was an interesting sight to see no fewer than eight West Bengal Ministers including the Chief and the Deputy Chief along with the Acting Governor and the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University among the distinguished spectators in the first League derby match between East Bengal and Mohun Bagan. This tie was actually staged after a good deal of tussles and tug-of-war.

Yet can all these and the revived fall of a stadium improve the standard and increase a sufficient number of talents to keep our football going? Have the Clubs colleges and schools increased vitality enough for the play is such? After all the future of the game cannot depend entirely on two Clubs, how ever popular. And the proverbial

Mohun Bagan-East Bengal match in these days, fetching enormous gate receipts, is more a commercial enterprise than a genuinely class exhibition of soccer.

Colour of Life

COLOR appeals to natural colour charms that win colour out of the attention of the body colour places Colour entertains Colour takes the fancy of it We all a day of mirth and jollity a cheerful day and a merry one, life colour in life A festive day is a red letter day Emotions are pictured in coquise as pale with fear red in anger and green with jealousy (Colour plays a prominent role in fireworks of Diwali illumination of the city in the evenings of national days, etc.

Sun the presiding planet of our solar system, the source of light, heat, and helium, so essential to our outward life. But colour is joining the richest and best of nature, so that we receive from the sun the pleasant variety of the rainbow, to turn them into directly from the sun.

Sun and all the
source of the fu-
who can in the off-
what light that le-
shed forth with y-
the night. We per-
the colorful flower of
other planets to illus-
men and in half
their tan or dark com-
plexion in the re-
tively of Mars and Saturn
the ruling planet in their
lives.

The seeds of colour were known in India, but from the prehistoric times. The planetary deities, the 'navagraha devatas' are worshipped even now with flowers and garlands appropriate to their colour. Astrologers advise their

clients in wearing of rings or jewels set with gem stones suitable to particular planets to develop their beneficial influence and deflect the malefic effect. These influences are indicated by the positions held by the planets in the horoscope. Thus coral is favorable to Mars and opaline to Saturn.

These rays affect the health of their owners in the same way as they influence the fortunes of the allpath emphatic violet rays in life.

... the system according to

P S V AIYER

[illegible]

Our thoughts and emo-

tions are found on occult
 investigation to be charged
 with colours. Thought
 forms carry colours too fine
 for our physical eyes or
 instruments to catch up.
 As for emotions' anger is
 a unit to throw out sparks
 and arrows of dark red
 complexion. Affection pro
 duces a soft blue cloud.
 Devotion projects a violent
 orange and so on. These pro
 ceed from our astral bodies.
 Musical notes and sounds
 are also found to carry
 colours.

Persons of varied temperaments choose different colors. The senior and the young prefer light colors, while the gay and the serious delight in the rich and gayly colored blue-green. Little other hides fit the ideal of economy and convenience to the purchaser. The popularity of linens, pique, wash, lawn, and velvet is owing to the excellence of their texture. Here color is of less importance, and the hygienic effect is on the nerves of the sensitive, shop or office and visit alike.

1. The researches are all on the main factory files and I am looking on in this line in the universities and institutes of technology.

While hundreds of thousand of colours claim our attention they all spring from a single source which is strangely enough not at all recognized as a colour and that is white and all the colours close in dark which remains the great Unknown



The director of the film 'The Great Escape' (left) and the actor 'The Great Escape' (right) are shown in the photograph. The director is standing on the left and the actor is standing on the right. The photograph is a black and white photograph.

Today and tomorrow of Indian cinema

MANUJENDRA BHANJA

IS the Indian cinema on the brink of big changes — changes that may transform its act-

The Khosla Committee Report on Film Censorship and the Union Government's move to form a Film Council on statutory basis may be interpreted as significant pointer of things to come, though it is not possible to predict just now what shape these will eventually take. But there is no denying the fact that there is a genuine desire to rescue the Indian cinema from its present rut to improve its standard and stabilise it as an art-industry to bring it

into line with the progressive cinema in other parts

of the world. It is a commendable aim.

From the

creative trends of the industry by different people — each according to his own light. Even if one is not commercially involved, and his interest in the cinema is only aesthetic — is an art-lover, — his personal prejudices and social beliefs are sure to colour his

judgment about any drastic change in the pattern of entertainment.

In these circumstances, one should not be surprised if the controversy currently raging over some aspects of the Khosla Report.

The persistent trade objection to the Government-sponsored Film Council

is worth noting in this connection is the very welcome fact that the Government, the trade, the cinegoers and our social monitors have been sufficiently roused to take a living interest in the cinema which is evident from the vehemence of their respective support to or opposi-

TODAY AND TOMORROW OF INDIAN CINEMA

sition against this or that aspect of the question. This living interest is sure to benefit the cinema as a whole and would be the most vital factor in formulating the basic policies to help its growth.

The Indian film industry is often compared to a leviathan whose size it has assumed without its intrinsic strength.

In capital outlay and employment potential it is the third largest industry in the country. Yet some of the essential conditions of a big industry are lacking in its case. Its most vital deficiency springs from its lack of organisation and dearth of finance.

There is hardly any planning behind produc-

tion activities, and what we find all around is a mass of dishevelled growth. This no doubt adds to the country's numerical superiority in film production, but hardly reflects its creative potentiality. Yet glimpses of that potentiality are to be found here and there, most of which go waste for want of financial backing in a profit-oriented industry.

As film producers do not get any assistance from banks, they have to depend for finance solely on usurious private money-lenders who charge exorbitant rates of interest. This initial handicap has such a crippling effect on the industry as a whole that few movie-makers have the inclination to look beyond their nose in so far as indulging in new experiments or taking chances is concerned. Under this system the producer's only concern happens to be to get back his money as soon as possible so that he can launch his next production. In the same process is born — by repaying his previous debt and starting anew on borrowed money at the same high rates of interest.

The interest on capital naturally eats away the major portion of a film's earnings and unless a picture proves a super-hit little is left for the producer to enjoy except some marginal benefits. This explains his eagerness to keep the wheels moving by turning out commercial monstrosities one after another without the slightest effort at improving his product's content or quality.

In an organised industry this should not be so. Even if one has the urge,

he has not the wherewithal to give concrete shape to his ideas and thereby enrich the cinema qualitatively. The Government-sponsored Film Finance Corporation is so rigid in its outlook and its terms are so stiff that producers prefer to turn to private financiers, from whom money is more easily available though at an exorbitant rate of interest.

In any measure the authorities may take for improving the standard of Indian films a stable economic basis should first be ensured. This would create the proper climate for solution of the other problems connected with the main question.

In sharp contrast to other advanced countries our political leaders have taken much too long to realise the great potentiality of the cinema—not only as a purveyor of entertainment but also as the most powerful medium of mass communication. It is not without reason that the captains of the Indian film industry which has attained its present gigantic stature through private enterprise and without any kind of State aid would not take kindly to any measure enforcing official control over what had so long been their exclusive territory.

While the cinema habit of the people has been growing by leaps and bounds the official restrictions in the matter of new theatre constructions have held up the growth of cinemas in adequate proportion. The heavy tax-load on the industry is another vital factor which has crippled its growth. The various taxes and duties which the film in-



SANDHYA ROY
SUBHENDU
JANAKI RAY
CHANDRA ROY

TARASHANKAR

**AROGYA
NIKETAN**

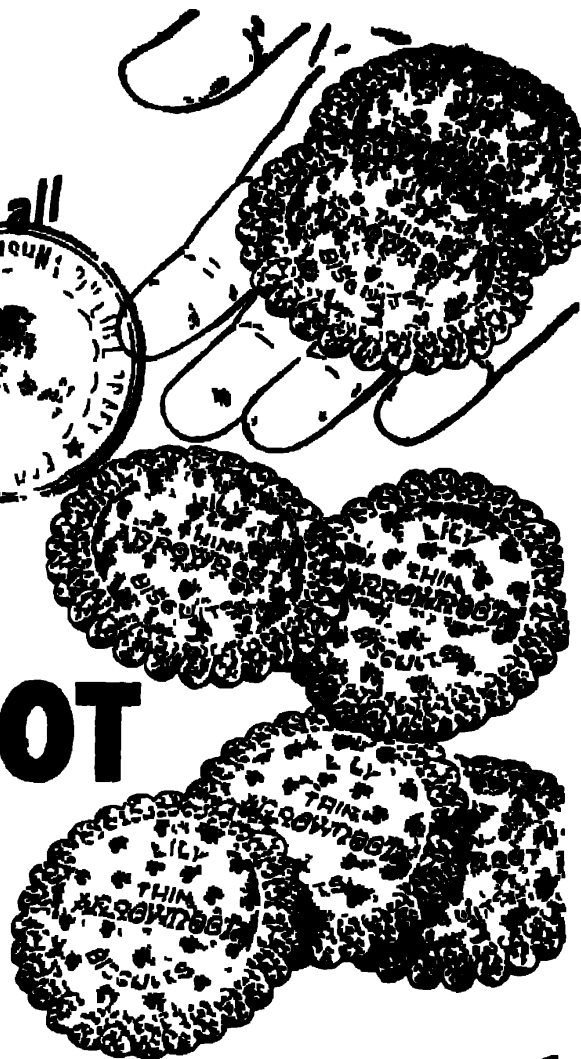
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The West Bengal Gov-



Who said Indian products 'fly' it shy of off-beat themes? This is a scene from New Dimension Enterprises' *41 Five*. But here, a lot of the actor English dialogue film for the same week. Out of the four articles three are here. David and the young lady is a 'the model and little'

&

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TODAY AND TOMORROW OF INDIAN CINEMA

ernment too are intent upon reorganising the local film industry on a stable basis. The fruits of the deliberations of the Consul-

tative Committee that has been set up by the State Government with representatives from every sector as members are being

eagerly awaited.

In sum, it looks certain that the Indian film is going to have a face lift—sooner than later.



The old you in a new form... described in their co-laboring... Von Neumann... S. S. L.

THE GREAT SHIFT



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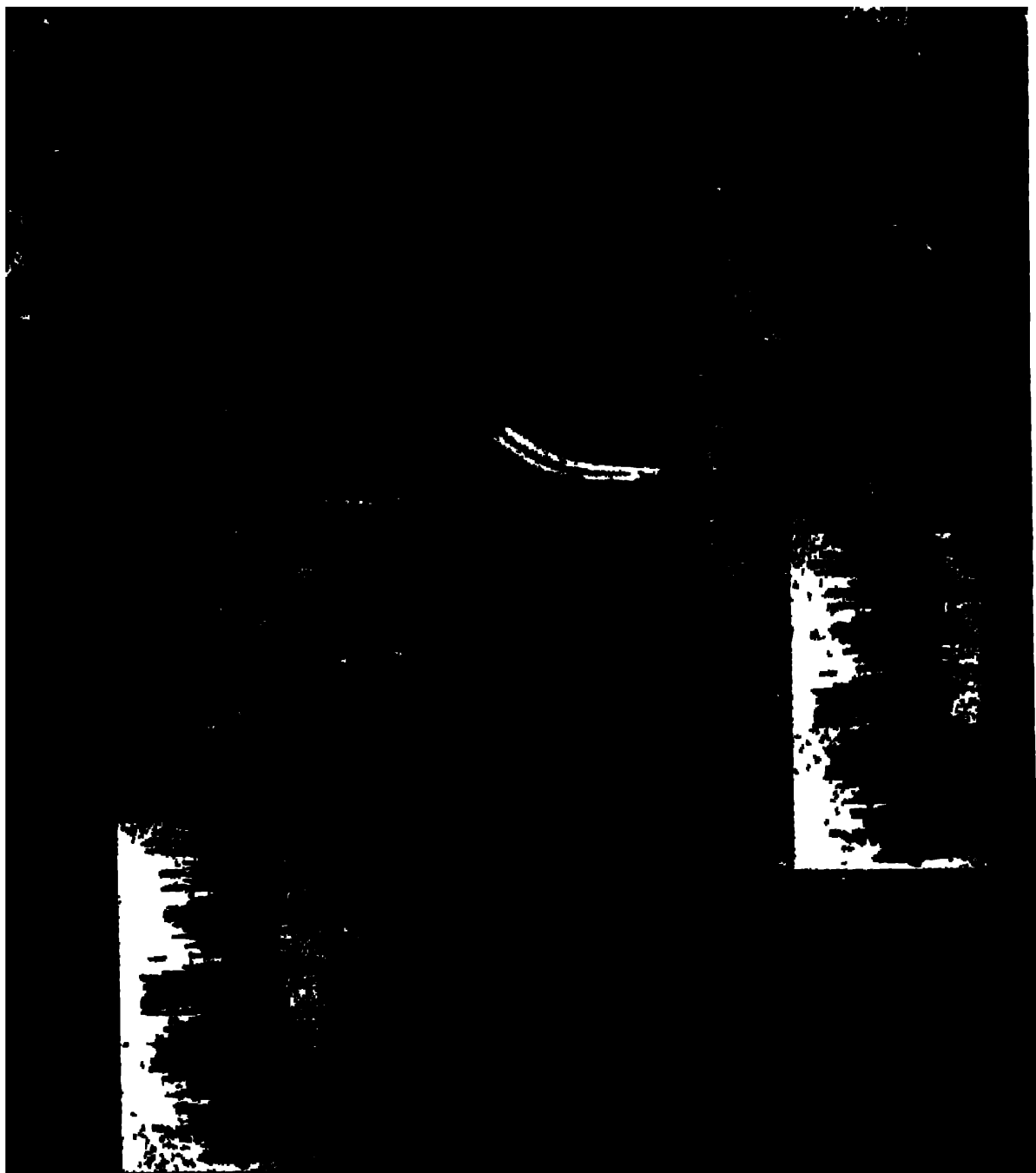
for loans to small scale industrial entrepreneurs farmers retail traders transport operators and professionals a greater emphasis is placed on repayment potential as determined by

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- Managerial efficiency
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OVER 115 BRANCHES IN WEST BENGAL

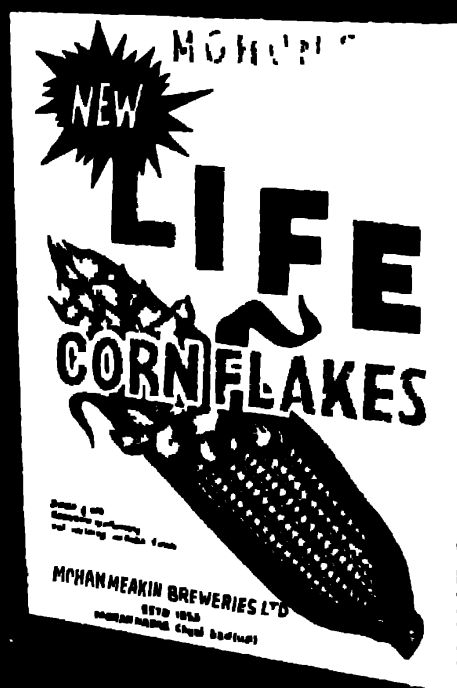


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CORN FLAKES



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When you give your children Muhn's New Life Corn Flakes - the sun-shine breakfast food - you give them a whole-some, favourite, light meal. At the parental care they need to grow strong and full of life.

This extra flavoured meal is tempting rather irresistible when taken with cold milk and fresh cream.

Oh yes I take it this morning again tomorrow morning and of course on every morning. Well, I will like it.

MOHAN MEAKIN BREWERIES LTD ESTD 1855 Mohan Nagar Ghazialahad (U P)

